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Testimony in Support of LD 34: “An Act to Require a Person to Show Photographic Identification for the Purpose of Voting.”

Presented to Joint Committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs

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Good morning Senator Hickman, Representative Supica and honored members of the Committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs. Thank you for this opportunity to speak in favor of LD 34. My name is David Andrews. I am a private citizen, a retired physician, a 31 year military reserve veteran, and, most recently, a poll worker for my home town of Falmouth.

Nothing is more critical to our constitutional process than readily accessible voting for all citizens. However, the electoral process must also instill a full measure of voter confidence. These two essential goals are not mutually exclusive, and to claim otherwise is fallacious.

As a poll worker for my community, I have witnessed elements of the election security process that our outstanding town clerk staff take so seriously. They include ballot access security, chains of custody, tabulation security, bipartisan citizen participation, and the use of voter rolls that are securely generated. However, any chain of security is no stronger than its weakest link. I argue strongly that Maine’s weak link is the lack of a valid photo ID, presented by every person to whom a ballot is issued.

Maine is in the distinct minority of states. Thirty-six states now have voter ID requirements, 23 of which mandate photo ID’s. In the past 3 years, 7 states have enacted laws to create or strengthen voter ID processes¹. Many other democratic countries have voter ID laws. These include the United Kingdom, Canada, Mexico, Germany, Switzerland, Norway, and others. Maine is an outlier in this regard.

As an oft-cited Monmouth University poll revealed in 2021, 80% of the 810 adults supported photo ID when casting ballots, while 71% supported easier in person early voting², as we do here in Maine.

A voter photo ID requirement is common sense. Such mandates are indeed part of our daily lives: airline travel, public interstate buses, financial transactions, hotel check-ins, access to government benefits, health care, car rental, and more. These are common sense security measures made necessary by the frailty of human nature.

My most recent experience as a poll worker, has moved me to speak out. My task was issuing ballots after my colleague’s check of the voter list. Multiple voters presented ID cards, either assuming it was expected, or to make a statement. I rebuffed them all, as required. During that morning, I became aware of two individuals voting who had not resided in Falmouth, for well over two years. Both issues were resolved for the future, and with no public challenge. In spite of this experience, I do not believe that voter malfeasance in Maine has altered any election results. However, as just one person at one table in one town, I witnessed fraud, two similar incidents. Though somewhat minor, it has undermined my confidence in one element of our Maine electoral process.

I sincerely hope that the Maine legislature will take action to discourage such activity.

Thank-you all for your time and effort in leading our state, and for this opportunity to speak.

¹ <https://www.ncsl.org/elections-and-campaigns/voter-id>

² https://www.monmouth.edu/polling-institute/reports/monmouthpoll_us_062121/