

Hon. MaryAnne Kinney  
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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**

February 6, 2023

Senator Hickman, Representative Supica, members of the Veterans and Legal Affairs Committee, I am MaryAnne Kinney of Knox, where cows still outnumber people-had to get that in there, old habits die hard- and I am here to testify in *support* of LD 34 An Act to Require a Person to Show Photographic Identification for the Purpose of Voting.

According to NCSL (National Conference of State Legislatures) 37 states have voter ID laws, with the most recent changes being a November 2022 citizen referendum in Nebraska and Ohio passing HB 458 in January 2023. This leaves Maine in the minority of states requiring Voter ID at the polls. This is not a partisan issue as some may try to convince you to believe. The opposition will tell you this will disenfranchise the elderly, minorities, and the poor. There will be arguments that voter fraud is why we need this law. Both arguments are false in my opinion and I will explain my positions. For the first concern this bill allocates language for the issuance of a special voter photographic identification card at no charge to the voter. The number of people affected by this is extremely small. Most of the people who will be said to be “disenfranchised” must have photo ID to receive the benefits of healthcare, EBT, and other federal and state welfare benefits. Some proponents will argue that voter fraud exists, I personally do not agree with this statement. Rather it is the perception that fraud exists and therefore many no longer vote as they are under the impression that fraud exists and their vote “doesn’t count”. Maine still has a decent voter turnout for elections but my experience as a candidate and representative who interacts with voters regularly is seeing a significant number of people who no longer vote due to concerns around this perception. The piece I try to relay about our secure elections is the fact that we still have paper ballots in Maine. Recent recounts prove that even the counting machines are properly counting our ballots. So I am confident for now that our elections are very secure. That has not allayed the concern to those who are convinced of fraud. Voter ID would be a simple step to show this state cares about every voter concern and wants full transparency in our elections.

According to a Gallup poll conducted in October 2022, 79% of those polled favor voter ID in order to vote at the polls. There is a partisan gap but the majority of those polled were in support of photo ID with 97% of republicans, 53% of democrats, and 84% of independents in favor of this type of legislation. In 2016 the numbers were similar with 80% in favor and the breakdown being closer among the two major parties (95% of republicans, 63% of democrats, and 83% of independents in favor).

During testimony of voter ID and other election law bills in the 130<sup>th</sup> legislature we heard repeatedly from municipal and town clerks who were overwhelmingly in favor of voter ID. As someone who has worked at the polls on election day in the past (when my name was not on the ballot) it was difficult to get friends and neighbors to follow the simple procedure of stating their name and address to pick up a ballot under Title 21-A MRSA §671 sub §1. Showing a photo ID with this information would reduce the failure to comply with this section and assist election clerks in making sure they are checking off the correct voter on the list.

In the 130<sup>th</sup> legislature, LD 1126 regarding online voter registration was enacted with the argument of Maine being in the minority of states offering online registration similar to our minority status on this issue. The representative from Camden, Rep. Doudera stated that in 2010 only 6 states offered online registration but by 2021 (she thought 38) states including Washington DC offered this service. I verified that currently 42 states (now including Maine, although the rules have yet to be fully established) offer online voter registration. The kicker is that in order to register to vote there still needs to be a form of ID (most commonly a photo ID) to prove valid registration.

I urge this committee to unanimously support an ought to pass motion for this bill.

Thank you,

Hon. MaryAnne Kinney