



Department of the Secretary of State

Shenna Bellows
Secretary of State

JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

L.D. 747, "An Act to Require the Probate Court to Report Name Changes to the State Bureau of Identification"

Testimony Provided by Shenna Bellows, Secretary of State

March 08, 2023

Senator Carney, Representative Moonen, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary, I am Secretary of State Shenna Bellows. Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today neither for nor against of L.D. 747, "An Act to Require the Probate Court to Report Name Changes to the State Bureau of Identification."

The Address Confidentiality Program (ACP), administered by the Secretary of State, provides an important service to residents of the State of Maine who are survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault or stalking. The program has two basic parts. First, the ACP provides a designated address to victims who have moved to a new location unknown to their abuser. Secondly, the program provides participants with a free first-class confidential mail forwarding service.

ACP allows both state and local agencies to contribute to the safety of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking survivors by denying abusers the opportunity to use public records to violate the rights of others.

We have concerns with the current language of the bill but have expressed these concerns to the bill sponsor and with the Director of Public Safety for the Maine State Bureau of Identification (SBI). It is our understanding a working group of stakeholders will be convened in order to secure the safety of individuals like ACP participants and others.

I am proud of the work my office does to provide peace of mind to individuals who have survived traumatic situations and I look forward to the working group so these survivors may be able to maintain their peace of mind.

This concludes my testimony. I am happy to answer any questions or get additional information to the Committee ahead of the work session. Thank you for your time.