



Department of
the Secretary of State

Shenna Bellows
Secretary of State

**TESTIMONY OF
SHENNA BELLOWS, SECRETARY OF STATE
DEPARTMENT OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE**

Before the Joint Standing Committees on Appropriations and Financial Affairs
and Veterans and Legal Affairs

January 23, 2025

L.D. 209, An Act to Make Supplemental Appropriations and Allocations from the General Fund and Other Funds for the Expenditures of State Government and to Change Certain Provisions of the Law Necessary to the Proper Operations of State Government for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2025.

Senators Rotundo and Hickman, Representatives Gattine and Supica, and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committees on Appropriations and Financial Affairs and Veterans and Legal Affairs, my name is Shenna Bellows and I am the Secretary of State. I am here today to present testimony in support of those items presented in the 2025 Supplemental Budget for the Department of the Secretary of State.

Department information begins on page **A-44** of the **Budget Document**.

Bureau of Administrative Services and Corporations 0692

The Bureau of Corporations, Elections and Commissions is comprised of three divisions. The Division of Elections and the Administrative Procedures Act is our state's guardian of democracy, overseeing all state and federal elections for the State of Maine. The Division of Election Audits and Training is responsible for safeguarding voter confidence in our elections through election auditing and training. The Division of Corporations, UCC and Commissions serves as a repository for all records relating to business and nonprofit corporate entities as well as all liens filed on personal property under the Uniform Commercial Code and oversees notaries public, boards and commissions for the State of Maine.

There are 3 General Fund initiatives:

1. Initiative: Provides funding for increases in technology costs in accordance with MaineIT increases. The All Other request is **\$19,838 in FY 2024-25**.

Expenses from MaineIT have increased. This initiative seeks to provide funding for the increase.

2. Initiative: Provides funding for the approved reclassification of one Accounting Associate I position to an Office Specialist I position retroactive to August 2023. The Personnel Services request is **\$14,978 in FY 2024-25**.

This employee-initiated reorganization of one Accounting Associate I position to an Office Specialist I position was approved by the Bureau of Human Resources in August of 2023. The Office of Employee Relations did an audit of the position based on this request, and they determined that the position class needed to be raised to the Office Specialist I level and that the employee is eligible for back pay to 2023. If the funding is not provided now, the liability will continue to grow until the position is funded to the appropriate level. This position provides support for daily deposits of corporate filing fees, and other support for the Bureau of Corporations Elections and Commissions' accounting processes.

3. Initiative: Provides funding for the increase in election ballot printing, postage and other election costs. The All Other request is **\$408,431 in FY 2024-25**.

This amount represents the unbudgeted expenses associated with performing the legally required functions of administering the 2024 election. Specifically, because there were five referendum questions, we were required to print a second ballot, but the fiscal note process did not provide the Elections Division with funding for that second ballot. Moreover, continued consolidation in the printing industry and supply chain issues continue to drive substantial increases in costs for printing and delivery of ballots and absentee envelopes and other election supplies.

This concludes my testimony on the items included in the Governor's proposed FY 2024-2025 Supplemental budget.

I would be happy to answer your questions now or at the work session.

Thank you.

**DS200 Ballot Printing Price Quote for the State of Maine
November 5, 2024 Referendum Election**

Ballot Type (Camera Ready)	Ballot Size	Paper Weight	Paper Color	Cost for Official Referendum Ballots	
				Per ballot cost	Extended Cost (per ballot cost x est. 1,003,500 Ballots)
Referendum Ballots	8 ½" wide by 17" long	As provided in DS200 specifications	White	\$.37	\$371,295.00
				Cost for Sample Referendum Ballots	
				Per ballot cost	Extended Cost (per ballot cost x est. 12,000 Referendum Samples)
Sample Ballots	11" by 17"	50 or 60 lb offset	Green	\$.49	\$5,880.00
				Total Cost	
(Total of Extended Cost of Official plus Extended Cost of Sample Ballots)				\$377,175.00	
Note: Contractor will be responsible for shipping official ballots and sample ballots. Generally, absentee and election day ballots for DS200 towns are shipped separately, but state will be open to ballots for hand-count municipalities being sent in one shipment.				Estimated Shipping Costs	
				\$31,256.41	
				Grand Total Project Cost	
(Total of Printing Cost of Official plus Estimated Shipping Cost)				\$408,431.41	

Please provide name and contact information for person who will serve as Provider's point of contact: