



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Testimony of Rep. Jennifer Poirier introducing
L.D. 53, "An Act to Establish the November General Election Day as a State Holiday"
Before the Joint Standing Committee on State and Local Government

February 10, 2025

Senator Baldacci, Representative Salisbury, and Esteemed Members of the Committee,

My name is Jennifer Poirier. I proudly represent the good people of House District 70, which is Skowhegan.

I appear before you today to introduce an amendment to LD 53, "An Act to Establish the November General Election Day as a State Holiday".

I have received a mix of strong support and concern since the publication of this bill. Supporters have expressed excitement about the possibility of stronger levels of voter participation by having a State Holiday, while concerns were presented about the employer-related costs of enacting a State Holiday and finding employees who would be willingly to work a State Holiday.

I filed this bill with the revisors office on election day. My intent was to keep our children safe as many schools across our state are utilized as polling places. As I stood at the polls in Skowhegan, I received reports of numerous threats being made to schools, causing lockdowns and interruptions for both students and staff as well as election officials working the polling locations.

Many municipalities have no other option for polling locations. I believe the best option to address my concern for student and staff safety, the convenience of municipal polling locations, and the concerns of employers is to amend LD 53 to reflect my original intent: "Making the November Election Day a School Holiday". I believe that we can keep our children safe and do so in a fiscally responsible manner with the new language.

I realize that this amendment may change the committee of jurisdiction and am prepared to work with the committee as we navigate this process.

Thank you for allowing me to introduce LD 53 and present this amendment. I would be happy to answer any questions that you may have.

Jennifer Poirier
State Representative

District 70 Skowhegan

Sponsor: Representative Poirier
Drafted by: KKB
Date: 2/7/2025
New Title?: YES
Add Emergency?: NO

LD 53
Sponsor's proposed amendment

Amend the bill title as follows:

An Act to Establish the November General Election Day as a State School Holiday

Amend the bill by striking out everything after the enacting clause and inserting the following:

Sec. 1. 20-A MRSA §4802, sub-§1 is amended to read:

1. Unconditional holidays. Public schools shall close on the following days:

A. Patriot's Day, the 3rd Monday in April;

B. Memorial Day, last Monday in May or May 30th if the Federal Government designates that date;

B-1. Juneteenth, June 19th;

C. Independence Day, July 4th;

D. Labor Day, the first Monday in September;

E. Indigenous Peoples Day, the 2nd Monday in October;

E-1. The day of the general election, as defined in Title 21-A, section 1, subsection 19;

F. Veteran's Day, November 11th;

G. Thanksgiving Day, as designated by the Governor;

H. Christmas Day, December 25th; and

I. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, the 3rd Monday in January.

SUMMARY

This amendment changes the title of and replaces the bill. The amendment establishes the day of the general election, as defined in Title 21-A, section 1, subsection 19, as a school holiday on which all public schools must be closed.