



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Senator Hickman, Representative Supica, fellow members of the Committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs, I'm Steve Foster, Representative for House District 32, serving Charleston, Dexter, Exeter, Garland, Stetson, and a part of Bradford, here to present LD313, "An Act to Improve Voter Confidence in Electronic Ballot Counting by Requiring Ballots to Contain Unique Identifiers" and ask for your support.

Last summer, a gentleman from southern Maine who sometimes texts me with his ideas on energy, raised his concern with voting machines and his confidence in how his vote was counted. He proposed a simple "why didn't I think of that" remedy. As a result, LD313 may be one of the more straightforward proposals your committee will hear this Legislature.

I'm sure most of us have heard concerns from a constituent or two regarding the use of electronic ballot counting machines in their polling place. These concerns range from wondering "was my ballot tabulated correctly?" to, "was it counted at all?". This issue has been raised by democrat, republican, independent, and unenrolled voters, both prior to and following elections. It has risen to the level where some have questioned the integrity of their municipality's voting machines and the final reported results. In at least a few Maine communities, an effort is being championed to end use of the machines and return to counting all ballots by hand.

LD313 offers what seems a fairly easy answer to citizen concerns. It requires each ballot to contain a serial number or other "unique identifier" which would be scanned and recorded with each ballot's votes. This identifier would be known only to the voter. The identifiers and corresponding votes would be converted to a format allowing public accessibility on the municipality's website. Concerned voters could record their ballot's identifier and later view how their votes were tabulated.

LD313 would serve to improve voter confidence in the use of electronic voting machines and will prove the integrity of this system of vote tabulation in our State. I hope you will agree. Thank you for your consideration. I'm glad to answer any questions you may have.

Thank you.
Respectfully submitted,
Steve Foster
State Representative

District 32 Charleston, Dexter, Exeter, Garland, Stetson, Bradford (part)