



Shenna Bellows  
Secretary of State

## *Department of the Secretary of State*

### *Bureau of Corporations, Elections and Commissions*

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Deputy Secretary of State

#### **JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON VETERANS AND LEGAL AFFAIRS**

Testimony of Shenna Bellows, Secretary of State  
Department of the Secretary of State

March 10, 2025

Testifying against

#### **L.D. 266 "An Act to Require the Updating of Voter Registration Signatures"**

Senator Hickman, Representative Supica and Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs, my name is Shenna Bellows, I live in Manchester, and I am the Secretary of State. I am speaking today against L.D. 266.

Under current law, Mainers already have the opportunity to provide new signatures. They can do so by filling out a new voter registration card. This already happens for many Maine voters throughout their lives as they move, change their name, or change their party enrollment. Once a voter is registered to vote, we cannot require them to re-register to vote, only that they update their registration if needed.

L.D. 266 states that signature must be updated every five years. It does not say what would happen if someone does not update their signature. Would they be removed from the central voter registration system? Would they be denied the opportunity to receive a ballot? Would their signatures on a citizen initiative be invalidated? All of these would be illegal effects of this law.

This bill would also be a huge burden to the Division of Elections and municipal offices all around the state. First, the Central Voter Registration system currently (as with the one in development for deployment later this year) does not have a function to mark and track how long someone's signature has been on file. That would need to be programmed, which would have both a time and monetary cost. The ability of clerks to run a report to determine which voters need to receive the mailing every five years would also need to be programmed in. Clerks would need to produce, mail, and receive a massive amount of mail each year. And if any municipality failed to complete this task, the state would be at risk of lawsuit for violating the National Voter Registration Act requirement that list maintenance be uniform and nondiscriminatory.

If candidates are concerned that voters' signatures on their candidate petitions are not accurately being verified, I would encourage them to call the Elections Division. Working with clerks to ensure work is being done accurately and in accordance with election law is something we do every day. We already

have a system to solve the issues that were raised. L.D. 266 is the wrong solution for a problem that doesn't truly exist.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify, and I am happy to answer any questions you may have.