



Shenna Bellows  
Secretary of State

*Department of the Secretary of State*  
*Bureau of Corporations, Elections and Commissions*

Julie L. Flynn  
Deputy Secretary of State

**JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

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

*April 2, 2025*

Testifying in opposition to

L.D. 1155 “An Act to Ensure Appropriate County Government Operations Relating to the Position of Dedimus Justice”

Senator Baldacci, Representative Salisbury and Members of the Joint Standing Committee on State and Local Government, my name is Shenna Bellows, I live in Manchester, and I am the Secretary of State. I am testifying in opposition to L.D. 1155.

The Division of Corporations, UCC and Commissions is the record-keeping entity for commissions in Maine, including for Notaries Public, Marriage Officiants, and Dedimus Justices. Dedimus Justices perform a single function under Maine statute, that of swearing in various public officials. The office is currently a lifetime appointment by the Governor, but the application form is available from, and the paperwork managed by, the Notary Office within our Division.

Right now, there are 1,096 Dedimus Justices in Maine, though at this time it is unclear how many of them are really active in that role. More truly active Dedimus Justices are needed in order to spread out their work. Under L.D. 1155, Maine would have just 48 Dedimus Justices and their work would be limited to county government and county sheriff duties and responsibilities. This would create a massive issue for the functioning of local and state government.

There are reforms needed in the area of the Dedimus Justice role. That is why my office worked to introduce L.D. 129, which was heard recently by this Committee. The reforms proposed in that bill will be more effective and helpful than those proposed here in L.D. 1155. I encourage you to vote Ought Not To Pass on this bill.

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