



**Testimony of Beth White  
Maine Service Employees Association, SEIU Local 1989**

**In Support of LD 1666, An Act to Include in the Ranked-choice Election Method for  
General and Special Elections the Offices of Governor, State Senator and State  
Representative and to Make Other Related Changes  
Sponsored by Senator Cameron Reny**

**Before the Joint Standing Committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs  
2 pm Thursday, April 24, 2025  
State House Room 437 and Online**

Senator Hickman, Representative Supica, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs, I'm Beth White, Director of Politics and Legislation for the Maine Service Employees Association, Local 1989 of the Service Employees International Union. We are a labor union representing over 13,000 Maine workers, both active and retired.

We're here today in support of LD 1666, which would include general and special elections for Governor, State Senator, and State Representative in the ranked-choice election method.

In 2016, MSEA members supported then-question 5, which asked "Do you want to allow voters to rank their choices of candidates in elections for U.S. Senate, Congress, Governor, State Senate, and State Representative, and to have ballots counted at the state level in multiple rounds in which last-place candidates are eliminated until a candidate wins by a majority?" Question 5 passed with 52.12% support in November<sup>1</sup>, and Maine became the first state in the nation to use ranked-choice voting for elections.

Not only did the original ballot initiative to implement Ranked Choice Voting pass in 2016, but there was also a successful people's veto campaign against legislation to delay implementation until 2021; 54.2% of voters supported the people's veto<sup>2</sup>, and Mainers used ranked-choice voting for the first time on June 12, 2018. Over the last decade, Mainers have made it clear time and again that they support RCV and want to see it used in Maine elections.

1. <https://www.nytimes.com/elections/2016/results/maine-ballot-measure-5-allow-ranked-choice-voting>  
2. <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2018/06/12/us/elections/results-maine-primary-elections.html>

Currently, ranked choice voting is used for primaries and general elections for federal office, but is only used for primaries for state office. LD 1666 would ensure that RCV is used in all state and federal elections, eliminating confusion for voters and ensuring that the policy Maine voters supported twice is implemented. Having a unified system of conducting elections in Maine makes sense. Standardizing general elections in Maine will help simplify the process not only for voters, but for municipal clerks as well.

Additionally, having RCV be applied to all races will ensure we elect candidates whom a majority of Mainers support. It helps give voice to third party candidates and eliminates any "spoiler effect" when third party candidates run. It gives voters a greater voice in elections.

For those reasons, we continue to support Ranked Choice Voting and see LD 1666 as a step toward respecting the will of the voters and ensuring RCV applies to all state and federal elections in Maine.

Thank you and I would be happy to answer any questions.