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TO: The Honorable Craig Hickman  
The Honorable Laura Supica  
Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs

DATE: April 24th, 2025

RE: 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

I appreciate the opportunity to submit testimony. **I support LD 1666.**

In Maine, we have only one statewide state race, Governor. We also have a high percentage of unenrolled voters, and a strong independent streak throughout all voters. That means we almost always have more than two candidates on the general election ballot (since 1978, every time but once), and third-party candidates are often viable.

This bill fulfills the strong desire of the more than 388,000 voters who passed Ranked Choice Voting into law in 2016 to elect a governor with broad support every time. While RCV has many upsides, the one that was front of mind for most voters was the importance of electing a governor with at least grudging support of a majority of those voting. Too many prior multi-candidate races resulted in a winner with a low percentage of votes, often under 40%. It has been a big disappointment that this facet of the Ranked Choice voting law was not allowed to go into effect.

Since 2018, we've use RCV in primary and federal elections, and in Portland we now use it for municipal offices, too. Voters took to the new system pretty easily but remain frustrated that our general elections for Governor, State Senator, and State Representative do not use RCV. We want to be able to say more on our ballot by ranking our choices

This bill fixes the problem. And the time is right to do so. The court decision in Alaska that allowed their RCV system to be fully implemented changes the legal landscape from when the court in Maine had the issue before it. Our systems are similar, and our constitutions are similar. This bill is carefully crafted with the reasoning of the Alaska

court in mind, and of course any future review of RCV by a Maine court will be informed by the Alaska ruling.

Maine has a robust political culture, with competitive elections and high voter turnout. Let's expand RCV to the most important state races. It's time.

Please vote Ought to Pass on LD 1666.