

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

DATE: April 24, 2025

RE: LD 1666 – An Act to Include in the Ranked-choice Election Method to General and Special Elections the Offices of Governor, State Senator, and State Representative and to Make Other Related Changes.

Dear Senator Hickman, Representative Supica, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Veterans' and Legal Affairs;

My name is Dawn Walls, and I live in the town of Unity. I am here today testifying in support of LD1666. I support this bill because,

RCV has been used in Maine since it was approved by referendum in 2016. We have seen how effective RCV is in saving time and resources, by eliminating the need for separate run-offs, in races with more than two candidates, when one candidate does not have a plurality of votes. All the information needed is already there with a designation for second or third, etc. choices. I really like that RCV renders moot any concerns about "splitting the vote" while giving voice to alternative candidates.

Mainers' clearly prefer RCV, having already voted in favor of RCV more than once (2016 and 2018). It only hasn't been applied to gubernatorial and legislative races in Maine due to a faulty Maine Supreme Court decision in 2017. That decision was made through a misunderstanding of how RCV works, and conflating a winning candidate as one with the most first place votes, as opposed to the candidate with the highest final tally of votes (which satisfies the plurality requirement in the Maine State Constitution).

Since in 2024 a similar confusion was cleared up by the Alaska Supreme Court, it should be a simple matter to clarify that RCV is in agreement with our own state's constitution and to apply it to all elections. As part of correcting the decision previously made in the Maine Supreme Court, I support asking the Legislature to call for a Solemn Occasion.

So, applying RCV to all elections is not only constitutionally appropriate, but it is also more convenient and less confusing to voters to have such consistency across our elections. It is time to get the RCV process in line with the Maine State Constitution and the will of the voters of Maine. Please be a part of helping us to do that and strengthen what is already a great system of voting for all Mainers!

For these stated reasons, I ask for the committee to support this bill. I thank the committee for your time and the opportunity to testify.