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## Testimony of the Maine Municipal Association

### In Opposition To

**LD 1635 - *An Act to Streamline Municipal Referenda Recount Initiation*  
May 5, 2025**

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Senator Baldacci, Representative Salisbury and members of the State and Local Government Committee, my name is Rebecca Lambert, and I am providing updated testimony in opposition to LD 1560 on behalf of the Maine Municipal Association's (MMA) elected 70-member Legislative Policy Committee (LPC). For reference, MMA is a nonpartisan, nonprofit member service organization and aims to help provide policy solutions that work for all residents in Maine and the LPC guides the advocacy efforts and establishes positions on bills of municipal interest.

Municipal officials take seriously the responsibility to uphold democratic principles and ensure that residents have meaningful opportunities to shape the direction of their communities. Local referendum processes are a vital part of that system, and local leaders support their thoughtful use. However, this bill imposes a one-size-fits-all approach that risk disrupting well-established and locally tailored systems—already functioning with integrity, transparency, and accountability.

Maine is a home rule state where municipalities have the right to determine their own processes for direct democracy. These systems have been built carefully, with input from residents, legal counsel, and generations of precedent. To override them with a statewide mandate not only disrespects that autonomy but suggests that the Legislature does not trust local governments or their voters to govern themselves.

If there are genuine concerns about how referenda are being handled in specific municipalities, those should be addressed at the local level, in that municipality. Blanket reforms from the State House are not the answer and will only weaken local control, introduce rigidity into processes that require flexibility, and sow confusion where there is clarity. For these reasons we urge the committee to vote ought not to pass.

Thank you for your time and for considering the municipal perspective on this issue.



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