



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

DATE: May 2, 2025

RE: LD 38 An Act Requiring Photographic Identification for Voting  
LD 397 An Act to Require a Voter to Show Photographic Identification

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Good morning Senator Hickman, Representative Supica, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs.

My name is Anna Kellar. I'm a resident of Portland. I am here today as Executive Director of the League of Women Voters of Maine testifying in opposition to LDs 38 and 397.

For 105 years, Leagues here in Maine and across the country have worked to educate and register voters and eliminate obstacles to voting. The League supports full voter participation by all eligible Americans, and we oppose efforts to create new barriers that block citizens' constitutional right to vote. At the same time, the League believes that elections should be secure, accurate, recount-able, accessible, and transparent.

While we must be vigilant to protect against threats to our elections, we must also avoid the impulse to enact costly measures that sound good on the surface but are actually not effective — particularly when an ineffective security provision would interfere with the freedom to vote. We do not believe that photo ID provisions will make our elections more secure, but we do believe that they will make voting harder for thousands of people, interfering with our freedom to vote.

Supporters will tell you that Photo ID provisions are necessary to prevent voter impersonation at the polls, but we are confident that existing provisions are sufficient to prevent this type of fraud. Voter impersonation is extremely rare, and it is rare because it is already pretty hard.

Here's what you would have to do: In Maine, you would need to identify a registered voter who is unlikely to vote in the election that you would like to compromise. When you check in at the polling place, you would need to announce this false name and address, while standing in front of people who live in the neighborhood or municipality and who may well know the voter you've chosen to impersonate. The election clerk will then repeat this information "in a loud, clear voice" expressly to ensure that others in the vicinity can hear. The risk of getting caught is relatively high, and the potential reward is always just one single vote.

Voter impersonation will never be a practical way to steal an election. Someone intent on doing so would have to recruit dozens, if not hundreds of people willing to commit a high-risk felony. At best, photo ID provisions pretend to reduce a threat that is virtually non-existent.

At first glance, requiring an ID to vote might seem sensible. We hear all the time, "Who doesn't have an ID?" and "How hard can it be to get an ID?" But life happens. People can lose or forget their IDs. They're not always aware of voting requirements, especially if the requirements are new. Some voters will face challenges that make it harder to correct the situation: transportation, child care, difficulty getting time off from work, and disabilities. We shouldn't leave behind people who have complicated lives.

As to the specifics of these two bills, we hope you will reject them outright, especially since they will unquestionably constitute competing measures with LD 1149. However, if you chose to work them, we have some questions:

- The provision about a "special voter identification card" issued by the Secretary of State: This provision appears in §671 of the statute, relating to voting procedures. Is it the intent of the sponsors that this provision would be available at every polling place on Election Day as part of voting procedures?
- Also, is it the sponsors' intent that the determination of what documentation must be presented to obtain the "special voter identification card" be determined in routine, technical rules?
- As drafted, these bills would seem to allow for the normal application of §673 relating to challenged voters for people who cannot meet the photo ID qualification on Election Day. Is that the sponsors' intent?

In summary, Photo ID provisions introduce a new barrier to voting, and one that only affects the class of voters who do not drive. Individuals who do not already have and carry a driver's license are asked to make an extra trip — and frequently several — just to get a Photo ID. And don't forget that they'll need to do it without driving. You might think of it as a poll tax that must be paid in unnecessary errands. We urge you to vote ought not to pass on LDs 38 and 397.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. I would be happy to answer any questions from the Committee.