

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

May 2, 2025

RE: LD1149 An Act to Require an Individual to Present Photographic Identification for the
Purpose of Voting.

My name is Sarah Stadler and I am a resident of Bath, Maine. I am here today testifying in opposition to LD1149. I oppose this bill on several grounds. First the title itself is misleading, as the requirement for photographic identification is only a small part of this bill. This disingenuousness leads me to suspect that there was a wish to hide the true purpose of the initiative, which seems to be to make it harder to vote. The fact that money from out of state sources paid for the collection of signatures to put this initiative in play adds to my concern. Further, the details of the initiative make it harder especially for certain groups. A good deal of the bill is devoted to gutting many parts of absentee voting. The fact that it would not be legal to have a trusted friend or family member deliver a ballot disproportionately affects the elderly and disabled populations. The fact that there would be fewer days to deliver ballots, as well as more complications to providing ballot boxes, would both serve to make it harder for people who work odd hours or multiple jobs to submit their ballots.

Then there is the stated purpose of the bill. A new requirement for photo identification is problematic in many ways. It will require a lot of manpower and money to implement. In this time of budget shortfalls, why introduce a new expense for something unnecessary given that voter fraud is vanishingly rare. A requirement to show ID disenfranchises those who do not have the requisite identification (married women who changed their name but not all their documents) nor the resources to acquire it, and it makes all of us who have voted for years wonder why we are now under suspicion for exercising what has been our right. It is likely to make people fearful of the very act that makes us proud to be citizens and makes others want to join us. As a person who has canvassed extensively in the last election I can report that non-citizens are not trying to vote. They are very interested in protecting their fragile right to be in this country and not interested in jeopardizing it.

For all of these reasons I oppose LD1149. I hope that you will not decide to vote on it in chambers, potentially denying the voting populace of Maine the opportunity to weigh in on the issue as is their right.