

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

Date: 5/2/2025

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

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

My name is Patricia Sprague and I live in Portland ME. I am testifying in OPPOSITION to LD1149.

I and others have many reasons to oppose this bill. But I want you to think about the damage this bill will impose on hardworking election workers.

Regarding absentee ballot processing: last fall, I assisted the City Clerk's office to help handle the impressive load of absentee ballots that Maine citizens submitted to exercise their right to vote. The extensive hand-work and authentication required to process those absentee ballots included multiple list-checking at various points, lots of physical sorting, and running carefully-assessed ballots through the ballot reading machines. All after assessing the signed envelopes in which every absentee ballot must be received. Last November, under our current system, over several days, multiple qualified individuals successfully handled all the ballots according to strict procedures.

But now, with the complicated additions to absentee voting required in LD 1149, the burden on election workers will increase greatly. And as the absentee-ballot processing work becomes heavier and in a shorter time frame, I fear that the number of ballot processing workers may decline, because of the huge extra labor and the shadow of threats over these goodhearted, often retired, public servants. This is one definition of Voter Suppression: not only more difficulty for voters, but possibly also fewer election workers to support the process—A PROCESS WHICH CURRENTLY ISN'T BROKEN!

Regarding Election Day voting: I assume each of you has exercised your voting franchise on Election Day. Last fall, at the polling place where I worked, the randomness of first-letter-of-last-names resulted in one of the voter lines (A thru L, I believe) slowing almost to a crawl and out the door, for more than two hours. One of my roles that day was to support the long line of patiently waiting voters, to whom I could only say "Thank you for coming out to vote, we'll get you through to cast your ballots as quickly as we can."

Now imagine how, under LD 1149's new rules, the pace of checking your name and address when you finally reach the table, is slowed significantly while the photographic ID of you and

every other voter has to be rigorously checked. Imagine the number of previously-qualified voters who have some issue with the new ID requirements having to wait in another line for the deputy registrar approval, and the additional frustration that would cause.

This is another definition of Voter Suppression: Slowing down the Vote on Election Day. Now more folks may leave after waiting longer than their schedules can handle, or worse, decide that voting isn't worth the new burdens. And it may become a struggle to find enough Election Day workers who are willing to increase their workload, time commitment, and possible risk of accusation. AGAIN, ALL THIS AGAINST AN ELECTION SYSTEM THAT ISN'T BROKEN!

I strongly urge this committee to OPPOSE LD1149. Thank you for the opportunity to testify, and for your time and attention.

Patricia Sprague
Portland Maine