



STATE OF MAINE
COMMISSION ON GOVERNMENTAL ETHICS
AND ELECTION PRACTICES
135 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, MAINE
04333-0135

**Testimony of Jonathan Wayne, Executive Director of the
Commission on Governmental Ethics and Election Practices
before the Joint Standing Committee on the Judiciary
January 27, 2026**

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and distinguished members of the committee: my name is Jonathan Wayne, and I am the Executive Director of the Maine Ethics Commission. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on behalf of the Commission concerning **L.D. 517**.

The Commission is neither for nor against L.D. 517. This morning, I reviewed an updated draft by the bill's sponsor, Rep. Kuhn. We greatly appreciate that she has adopted suggestions from the Office of Attorney General and is proposing a disclaimer requirement rather than a ban on the use of synthetic media, which would raise more serious constitutional concerns.

The Commission staff has some apprehension that L.D. 517, if enacted, would pose certain challenges in enforcing the law. What if someone complains about an *anonymous* communication containing manipulated images? It may be difficult for our Commission to identify who is responsible or to determine if anyone made an expenditure for the communication. Having said that, these sorts of challenges are just part of our job and, in my opinion, would not be a reason to oppose the bill.

Our department would be happy to answer any questions from the Judiciary Committee concerning administration of L.D. 517. In case I cannot make tomorrow's work session, please feel free to contact me at Jonathan.Wayne@maine.gov or 287-4179. Thank you.