



Maine Town & City Clerks' Association

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Date: March 19, 2021

To: Senator Joseph Baldacci, Senate Chair
Representative Ann Matlack, House Chair
And members of the State and Local Government Committee

From: Patti Dubois, Chairperson, Legislative Policy Committee
Maine Town and City Clerks' Association

Re: LD 1051 – An Act to Promote Civic Engagement and Voter Participation for Young
People by Lowering the Voting Age for Municipal Election to 16 Years of Age

Position: Neither For Nor Against

The Maine Town & City Clerks' Association is Neither For Nor Against LD 1051 for several reasons, and we thank you for the opportunity to outline our points for your Committee.

This bill would allow voters who are 16 years of age, but not yet 18 years of age, to vote in municipal elections but not state or federal elections. The responsibility would fall on the election clerk to be sure that voters are not being provided ballots to which they are not entitled to vote. Although accuracy is the expectation, errors do happen; therefore, it is possible that underage voters could be mistakenly provided with state or federal ballots. Municipal clerks feel that election laws are best if there is consistency for all voters. Voters may be confused when they do not receive all ballots that other voters receive.

Clerks pointed out that this law may be in conflict with the U.S. and State of Maine Constitutions. This bill, if passed, would also take away municipality's Home Rule Authority regarding municipal elections.

The Maine Town & City Clerks' Association appreciates the opportunity to share its testimony with the Committee. Should any questions arise, please feel free to contact me at 680-4210 or by email: pdubois@waterville-me.gov.