



Town of Mount Desert

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Good Morning Senator Luchini,

I am asking you for your support in opposing LD 208 – *An Act to Expand Access to Absentee Ballots*.

We are fortunate in the State of Maine because obtaining an absentee ballot currently is extremely easy and is quite convenient for most voters. I believe voters are easily able to obtain an absentee ballot before each election by requesting an absentee ballot by one of several means, by phone, internet, application form, or family/friend to pick up a ballot for the voter. Maine registered voters can request a ballot up until the close of business the Thursday before a Tuesday election. Maine Voters have three months to request an absentee ballot.

Our town, as well as many other towns even offer after hours voting a week or two leading up to the election to encourage “working residents” to come in and vote absentee. During an election, there are so many parts and moving pieces, that the public does not understand.

Towns need the two days of Friday and Monday to do final preparations for election day, examples include: run the incoming voter lists, process and data enter new voter registration cards, get last minute supplies ready, checking in with your election workers about working on Tuesday, recording all the absentee ballots that are being returned, physically set up your polling location, and respond to numerous resident’s phone calls and walk-in’s about hours and location of voting polls.

As you can imagine, as an election date draws closer, the Municipal Clerk’s office is busy with issuing absentee ballots most of the day and not getting the other election preparations ready. Not to mention many Town Office’s also register vehicles, issue vital records, and offer other municipal services concurrently with an election. Many nights after the office has closed, staff is then only able to get all the election preparations completed, which now also included entering with accuracy into the elections database, all the absentee ballots that were just issued and returned.

I stand in support of my fellow Town Clerk’s and as a member of the Maine Town and City Clerks’ Association and as a Deputy Registrar of Voters, I have the direct hands-on experience in administering, the many parts and moving pieces, that is required with elections and I am strongly opposed to LD 208.

Respectfully submitted,

Deputy Town Clerk

Deputy Registrar of Voters