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As a registered Maine Libertarian I would like to offer testimony in favor of passing LD 1061 today. This document significantly reduces the barrier of entry for new political parties in our state, while also giving fair warning to voters if their enrollment status is changed against their will by the state. LD 1061 gives a better voice to thousands of Mainers who have been systematically disenfranchised by the two-party system and who simply want better options for their friends, family, and neighbors.

The 5,000 voter requirement to form a political party in Maine is arbitrary, as requirements to form a party vary greatly from state to state. This threshold was expressly set to ensure that new political parties did not replicate the growth and success that the Maine Green Independent Party has enjoyed in our state. This requirement should be cut in half to give new parties breathing room to focus on recruiting candidates and winning elections, instead of constant voter registration drives just to maintain party status.

Last year the state forcibly changed over 5,600 Libertarian voter registrations for failure to meet the party recognition threshold, the least they could have done is notify these voters. Mass changing voter registration without clear, prompt communication is both alienating and disenfranchising to the voter. I can attest to this personally, as my voter registration was one of those changed. And although I thoroughly enjoy reregistering Libertarian each time I have to do it, I would appreciate it if the state did not waste my time and my town clerk's time by compelling us to do what has already been done. A 90-day notification will at least give those affected a better opportunity to reaffirm their party affiliation once again.

Thank you to Representatives Fecteau, Andrews, Evangelos, and Pluecker for submitting this legislative document for approval.