

Mary Callahan  
Kimball Street Studios, Lewiston

Senator Luchinni, Representative Caiazzo, and members of the Committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs. Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today. My name is Mary Callahan and I own Kimball Street Studios, a frame shop and gallery in Lewiston.

I'm here today to testify in favor of LD 1126, An Act To Update the Voter Registration Process. You may be asking yourself why would I as a small business owner care about voting access?

Well, for one, we're a community-based business. In the middle Lisbon Street in downtown Lewiston, we help to host Art Walk L-A, a monthly event that celebrates the vitality of Lewiston / Auburn by turning the downtown into a bustling arts district. I've seen firsthand how community engagement both fosters community and helps small businesses like mine. When artists, small business owners, and community members can all contribute to our community, we're all better for it. The same is true when everyone is able to participate in our democracy.

As a small business owner, I work long and often undeterminable hours. I am often the only person watching the shop. If I have to leave the store to update my voter registration, that means I have to close, losing out on potential customers. With heavily reduced foot traffic, countless Main Street businesses like mine are already hanging on by a thread and cannot afford to turn away potential customers.

Online voter registration would allow me to update my registration from my store, and I would not be forced to choose between running my business and participating in our democracy.

Please vote yes on LD 1126, An Act To Update the Voter Registration Process. Thank you for your time and I'm happy to answer any questions you may have.