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**Testimony of Representative Victoria Doudera on LD 1126, “An Act To Update the Voter Registration Process”**

**April 5, 2021**

Greetings Senator Luchini, Representative Ciazzo, and members of the Committee On Veterans and Legal Affairs. I am Representative Vicki Doudera, and I represent House District 94, the towns of Camden, Islesboro and Rockport. I’m here today to speak in favor of **LD 1126, “An Act To Update the Voter Registration Process.”**

The idea of modernizing our system to offer secure and accessible online voter registration is near and dear to me, so much so that I have also submitted a bill for Maine to move in this direction. It’s not yet printed, and may prove redundant given Rep. Pierce’s bill, and that’s why I am speaking in favor of this legislation today.

When was the last time any of you tried to register to vote in Maine? I would wager that, like me, you’ve lived in this state for many years, if not your whole life, and so the last time you registered was quite a while ago. Unless you’re a teenager or have recently moved here, you may not know how cumbersome the current process is. You fill out a card at your town office or city hall, at a voter drive, or at a branch office of the motor vehicle office, or you download and print the application found online. You then have to hand deliver or mail your card to your municipality.

Perhaps this doesn’t sound too difficult but at a time when many Americans do everything from banking to dating to reviewing medical records online, and many do not even own printers anymore, our current method of registration is so... 90’s. Online voter registration is convenient and fast. It’s also a safe, no contact way of registering to vote, and given the year we’ve all just

gone through, it makes sense to think of enhancements to our democratic system that are touch-free.

In addition to being convenient and safe, online registration saves taxpayers money and improves voter roll accuracy. Processing electronic applications is a fraction of the cost of processing paper applications. Arizona, the innovator in paperless voter registration, experienced a reduction in per-registration costs from 83 cents per paper registration to 3 cents per online registration. Here's another plus: Election officials report that letting voters enter their own information significantly reduces the likelihood of incomplete applications and mistakes. So it's not surprising that online registration is incredibly popular and has spread rapidly.

In 2010, only six states offered online voter registration. Now, thirty-eight states and the District of Columbia do. Fewer than a dozen states do not have online voter registration, and Maine is one of them. It's high time we modernize this cornerstone of our democracy! I urge you to vote in favor of LD 1126.

Thank you, and I am happy to answer any questions.