

Melissa Murphy
Scarborough

My name is Melissa Murphy and I am a resident of Scarborough. I am writing in support of LD 1126.

As a Maine citizen, I am very proud of the engagement of our voters and their high rates of participation in elections, even in the most challenging of times. I believe that we can further encourage and support Maine citizens' engagement and participation by adopting an online voter registration (OVR) system, as has been proposed by recently introduced legislation.

In 2020, mailing times were slowed for a variety of reasons, delaying the processing of voter registration applications, and potentially disenfranchising those who wished to vote, especially first-time voters. Recent proposals to "re-vamp" the postal system would do little, if anything, to improve future mailing times. OVR is a decades-proven system used in other states that streamlines the process of registration and eliminates the need for reliance on the overburdened postal system.

OVR also reduces the opportunity for human error, using data validation to correct errors before submission, ensuring that only correct data is submitted to clerks, and eliminating the need for manual data entry by clerks. Voter information would be encrypted, so private information would stay private. As an additional benefit, the implementation of OVR would allow the State to forego the cost of printing, scanning and processing voter registration forms each year.

As other states are moving to restrict voter access Maine can continue its leadership role in voter participation and engagement by implementing OVR to make registering easier for voters and officials while reducing costs and increasing data security at the same time.

Thank you.