



Maine Conservation Voters Maine Conservation Alliance

Testimony of Maine Conservation Voters & Maine Conservation Alliance
An Act To Update the Voter Registration Process
Before the Veterans and Legal Affairs Committee
April 5th, 2021

Good morning Senator Luchini, Representative Caiazzo and members of the Veterans and Legal Affairs Committee.

My name is Will Sedlack, testifying in support of LD 1126 “An Act To Update the Voter Registration Process” on behalf of both Maine Conservation Voters (MCV) and Maine Conservation Alliance (MCA). MCA is here today, as well, as a member of the Mainers for Modern Elections coalition, as a strong proponent of Online Voter Registration.

Maine Conservation Voters protects Maine’s environment and our democracy by influencing public policy, holding politicians accountable, and winning elections. Maine Conservation Alliance protects Maine’s environment and our democracy through education, collaboration and advocacy. We support measures that make voting more efficient, secure, and accessible for all eligible Maine voters. The OVR system outlined in that bill accomplishes all of those goals.

When all Maine people are fully integrated in both the democratic process and the clean energy economy, we will see all Mainers benefit by owning businesses, benefiting from clean energy solutions, and working collectively to advance the values of community wellbeing and collaboration that we can all agree on.

Establishing an online voter registration system for Maine makes good sense for a few reasons, notably that it is more efficient, less expensive, and more accessible than our current system.

OVR is more efficient than our current system

In our current system, information from each paper voter registration card must be manually typed in by town and city clerks. Manual data entry is time- and labor-intensive and an inefficient use of municipal resources.

OVR saves money

For the reasons mentioned above, OVR is also significantly cheaper than our current paper-based registration system. [Other states that have transitioned to an OVR system have transitioned from budgeting \\$4.72 per paper transaction to just 3 cents per online transaction.](#) If Maine follows this trend, OVR has the potential to save Maine more than \$900,000 per election cycle.

OVR is more accessible than our current system

In my role as Civic Engagement manager for Maine Conservation Alliance, I saw firsthand the almost insurmountable obstacles for some Maine voters trying to register to vote in 2020. Voting is a sacred right, not a privilege, and should not be contingent on the owning of a printer. This is especially true in a State where I, an avid fisherman and conservationist, can log on to a secure system on my phone each January and renew my hunting and fishing license.

Maine Conservation Voters and Maine Conservation Alliance strongly support this bill and we urge you to vote “ought to pass.” It is beyond time Maine joins 40 other states in offering an online voter registration system for its citizens.