



Maine Municipal
Association

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Testimony of the Maine Municipal Association

In Opposition to

LD 253, *An Act To Strengthen Maine's Election Laws by Requiring Photographic Identification for the Purpose of Voting*

LD 557, *An Act to Require Photographic Identification for the Purpose of Voting*

LD 1083, *An Act To Create a Voter Identification System*

April 7, 2021

Senator Luchini, Representative Caiazzo and members of the Veterans and Legal Affairs Committee, my name is Kate Dufour and I am providing testimony in opposition to LDs 253, 557 and 1083 on behalf of MMA's Legislative Policy Committee.

The three bills before you today would require all voters to present proof of their identity in the form of a photographic identification in order for their vote to be counted. Unlike previous iterations of this legislation, this bill does not provide for any alternative approach to allow voters to cast provisional ballots in the absence of appropriate identification.

Furthermore, the proponents of this proposal historically argue that requiring photographic identification is becoming ubiquitous in today's society and that this legislation should be enacted just to assuage the perception of any possible fraudulent voting. The municipalities mandated to conduct the elections would argue differently based on the serious concern that this proposal could very well lead to eligible voters being excluded.

The municipal leaders on the Association's Policy Committee do not believe there is sufficient evidence of any widespread voter fraud that needs to be solved by mandating this approach. The administration of all local, regional, state and federal elections has been accomplished on the ground by towns and cities pursuant to state law since Maine became a state in 1820. The design of the election system, which allows for and encourages complete openness, poll-watching transparency, and an extremely thorough cross-checking process in the administration of the balloting, prevents the possibility of fraudulent.

The process to educate voters about the new requirements, deal with the many voters caught off guard by the mandate, and check photo identification when the clerks have a mountain of other urgent duties to accomplish will add administrative duties to the task of administering elections. Expanded administrative duties lead to increased costs.

From the municipal perspective, additional administrative tasks and costs at the local level, as well as the additional steps the voters will have to take in order to get to the ballot box, are not justified given the absence of voter fraud in Maine.

Thank you for considering the municipal perspective on this issue.