



# HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

2 STATE HOUSE STATION  
AUGUSTA, MAINE 04333-0002  
(207) 287-1440  
TTY: (207) 287-4469

## **Billy Bob Faulkingham**

P.O. Box 121  
Winter Harbor, ME 04693  
Cell Phone: (207) 460-6967  
William.Faulkingham@legislature.maine.gov

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Rep. Billy Bob Faulkingham  
Testimony in Support

### **LD 941 An Act To Protect the Privacy of Absentee Voters**

**Good morning Senator Luchini, Representative Caiazzo, and members of the Committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs.** I am Representative Billy Bob Faulkingham and I am here to present **LD 941 An Act To Protect the Privacy of Absentee Voters.**

This bill requires an absentee ballot issued to a voter to be wrapped in a blank, opaque sleeve of paper or other material of sufficient thickness to prevent the writing on the ballot from being visible when placed in the ballot's return envelope.

This bill might seem somewhat unnecessary, but there's a very good reason for why I am proposing it. There are voters, especially elderly voters that are concerned about the ability for someone to view their votes at the time of opening their absentee ballot.

I'm not accusing any clerks or other poll workers of doing this, however the ability to do it is there under the current process. I was made aware of this abnormality by a friend that had voted absentee in another state in the past and asked why we don't have a "sleeve" envelope for absentee ballots? The "sleeve" envelope inside the absentee envelope protects the ballot from visibility.

Sixteen states require that absentee voters be provided with a secrecy sleeve. A secrecy sleeve—sometimes known as a privacy sleeve, inner envelope or identification envelope—is a paper document intended to protect voters' privacy by separating their identity and signature from their ballot. After completing a mail or absentee ballot, a voter places it inside the secrecy sleeve, which then goes inside the return envelope.

Once the absentee envelope is inspected and verified and opened, the ballot inside should be protected from visibility. When we go into a ballot box, we are granted a full level of privacy and deliver that ballot to the box ourselves. This level of privacy should be maintained for absentee voters as well.

This bill will relieve anxiety of some absentee voters and may increase participation in absentee voting. I hope you will give this bill an OTP report.

Thank you for your consideration. I will answer any questions you may have.

Respectfully  
Representative Billy Bob Faulkingham