

TO: Senator Hickman, Representative Supica, and the Honorable Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs

DATE: February 3, 2025

RE: LD 234, An Act to Eliminate Ranked Choice Voting

Dear Senator Hickman, Representative Supica, and the Honorable Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs:

My name is Julie Daigle and I'm from Cross Lake Township. I am writing to urge you to oppose LD 234, An Act to Eliminate Ranked Choice voting. Ranked Choice Voting (RCV) is a superior voting process for the people of the state of Maine, for a number of reasons, but there are two that speak most strongly to me.

Where ranked choice voting shines is in situations in which there is no candidate with a clear majority- as has happened in the past here in Maine and will certainly happen again at some point in the future. It also increases the diversity of views available for voters to consider.

Please bear with me; I think it's valuable to review the process that ranked choice voting allows: When three candidates make a strong showing at the voting booths, the candidate who ends up with the least amount of votes is no longer in the running- but the voters' whose first pick was the candidate who didn't make it still get to choose between the remaining candidates. I don't think we can emphasize this enough- **they still get to pick between the remaining candidates.**

In a non-RCV scenario, the voters whose first pick was the candidate who didn't make it no longer have a choice. Their vote, their voice, no longer counts. Ranked choice voting gives voters more choice and more say in the outcome of an election. This is key to encouraging citizen participation.

By giving voters more voice, RCV allows voting to be about the candidate, not the party; and it allows non-Republican or non-Democrat candidates to have a chance at the voting booths.

I'm proud to be a Mainer- I grew up in Maine and have worked most of my life here. Having grown up in one of the most remote and one of the poorer counties in the state, I know what it's like to feel like resources aren't as available, what it's like to feel like your voice is overlooked. Ranked choice voting gives voters agency. And having spent a good chunk of my professional life working all over the state in more populous areas, the simple truth is that the benefits are the same for all voters, even for folks who don't feel the distance from Augusta so keenly.

Please keep in mind that Mainers like ranked choice voting. They voted to affirm its use not once but twice. Ranked choice voting reinforces Maine's pattern of electing centrist, independent-thinking political leaders, which are leaders who reflect- Maine.

Please vote to oppose LD 234, An Act to Eliminate Ranked Choice Voting. Thank you.

Sincerely,
Julie Daigle
Cross Lake Township

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LD 234

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