



Maine Town & City Clerks' Association

Local Government Center • 60 Community Drive
Augusta, Maine 04330-9486
1-800-452-8786 (In Maine) • 207-623-8428
Fax 207-626-5947

Date: February 27, 2025

To: Senator Craig Hickman, Senate Chair
Representative Laura Supica, House Chair
And members of the Veterans and Legal Affairs Committee

From: Patti Dubois, Chairperson, Legislative Policy Committee
Maine Town and City Clerks' Association

Re: LD 718 – An Act to Require Municipal Clerks to Issue Absentee Ballots Only to Residents of that Municipality and to Eliminate Ongoing Absentee Voter Status

Position: OPPOSE

The Maine Town & City Clerks' Association is in strong opposition to LD 718 and we thank you for the opportunity to outline our points for your Committee.

Although ongoing absentee status is logically more manual and cumbersome for clerks to administer, members felt that removing that option would make it more difficult for some voters to vote. Members pointed out, however, that the new CVR system should help to automate this program to make it easier to administer.

Since its inception, clerks who have administered local elections that typically see lower turnout have seen stronger turnout numbers, due to absentee ballots being returned from voters with ongoing status, many of whom may not have taken the time to request a ballot for a small local election.

All members questioned the proposed restriction on issuing absentee ballots to family members or third parties that are not residents of their municipality and wondered what problem was being solved by this. Clerks expressed concern for residents who are homebound or otherwise disabled that may be disenfranchised if their only caregiver or family member resides in another town. Members felt strongly that this will make it more difficult for some voters to cast their ballots.

The Maine Town & City Clerks' Association appreciates the opportunity to share its testimony with the Committee. Should any questions arise, please feel free to contact me at (207)680-4210 or by email: pdubois@waterville-me.gov .