

Kerry Read  
Paris  
LD 718

Senator Craig Hickman and Representative Laura Supica and Members of the Committee:

My name is Kerry Read and I am testifying as a concerned citizen from the town of Paris. I am testifying in opposition to LD 718.

LD 718 will create unnecessary barriers to voter participation. Our voting system is safe and secure. Any attempts to restrict access to voting imply that there is fraud in the system. I reject that notion. It is unfounded in fact and harmful to our democracy. As a 70 year old, I have often voted by absentee ballot-to contend with many of life's circumstances: health issues, travel plans, caring for friends and family in distant places, avoiding crowds in pandemics, avoiding storms and unsafe driving conditions or unreliable transportation. These are just some of my personal reasons. For my friends and neighbors you may add in all the complications of childrearing; living with disabilities; job related barriers; temporary out of state assignments...the list goes on and on. The citizens of Maine need more access to absentee voting, not less. Participation in our democratic process relies on the fundamental right and responsibility of voting. The more participation in the process of our governance, the stronger our democracy.

I oppose this roll back of a secure and voter friendly program.