



March 17, 2025

Re: LD 911

Senator Hickman, Representative Supica, and the distinguished members of the Veterans and Legal Affairs Committee,

Mainers For Modern Elections would like to share our support for LD 911.

Mainers for Modern Elections is a non-partisan coalition of advocacy groups that believes a functioning democracy requires easy access to the ballot for eligible voters, especially for marginalized voting populations; strong voter protections; and confidence in a secure, modern, representative, and well-resourced elections system. The coalition advocates for statutorily protected voting rights, structural democracy reforms that expand voter access, and investment in and modernization of election administration and implementation. We pursue these policies through direct and grassroots advocacy, and by educating and providing resources to public officials and coalition members.

Mainers for Modern Elections believes public trust in the election system is a vital part of our democracy. Transparent processes are crucial to building that public trust. We applaud this bill for addressing an area in which there was ambiguity leaving space for individual interpretation of an election process.

In a 2024 primary race for State Representative, one of the three candidates on the ballot withdrew their name from the race after the ballots had been printed and after some voters had already cast their ballots. There was a question after this candidate's withdrawal if the race would utilize ranked-choice voting tabulation. In this circumstance, there was a winner with more than 50% of the vote, though if that had not been the case, the Secretary of State's office would have needed to interpret the current statute. Would this race have been considered a 2-way race or a 3-way race using RCV? We believe providing clarity is crucial to address this situation.

This bill will make it clear that in ranked-choice contests where one candidate withdraws, dies, or is disqualified after the ballots are printed, ballot preferences for that withdrawn candidate would be transferred during an RCV count to the next-most preferred candidate on those ballots. It also provides clarity that the determination of when a rank choice vote process will be utilized is completed on the 70th day before the election, coinciding with the time frame in which a candidate's name could be removed from the ballot.

In the case from the 2024 primary, if the race had not produced a winner with over 50% of the vote, this definition would have allowed voters who cast their ballot for the candidate who later withdrew to have their second choice candidate accounted for in their vote. This would ensure that we have a system that centers voter intent and helps prevent disenfranchisement.

This process honors the clear intention of the voters and ensures there is consistency in interpretation of the law.

Mainers for Modern Elections urges you to vote ought to pass on LD 911.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony.

Elizabeth Allen
Wells, Maine

Members of the Mainers for Modern Elections Coalition include:

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[AARP of Maine](#)

[Center for Secure and Modern Elections](#)

[Common Cause](#)

[Defend Our Health](#)

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[Maine SEA, SEIU Local 1989](#)

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