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Testimony of Rep. Kristen Cloutier in support of
**LD 1356, An Act to Change the State's Method of Allocating Electoral Votes
from a Congressional District Method to a Winner-take-all Method
Contingent on the State of Nebraska Changing its Method of Allocating
Electoral Votes**
Before the Joint Standing Committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs

Good morning, Senator Hickman, Representative Supica, and members of the Committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs.

Thank you for taking the time today for this discussion on a bill that is critical to preserving the ability of those of us living in the Second Congressional District to have our voices heard.

My name is Kristen Cloutier, and I am proud to represent my neighbors in District 94 in the state House of Representatives. I'm not just a lifelong Mainer; I'm a lifelong and proud resident of Lewiston. One of the things that drives me each day is a desire to do everything I can to ensure my neighbors have the freedom to participate in our community and to have their voices heard. I believe that when people feel empowered to participate in their communities - by opening a small business, serving as an elected official, a firefighter, or a police officer, and casting their ballots in local, state, and federal elections - we all win. That's why I've spent much of my time in public service focused on ways to make all aspects of participation easier - from establishing paid family and medical leave to streamlining business licenses so it's easier for Mainers to pursue their entrepreneurial dreams.

It's also why I'm submitting testimony in support of LD 1356. The Second Congressional District has always played a unique role in presidential elections, with one of our state's electoral votes reserved for whichever candidate wins our district. It's a meaningful way we can ensure our voices are heard, and it forces national campaigns to engage our community amidst an increasingly crowded political landscape. Only one other state - Nebraska - has this type of system. It's a method which has led us to sending a Democrat to Congress while backing a Republican for the White House. That's how we can step away from toxic partisan politics and cast votes based on who we think will do the best job serving our communities.

Right now, national political forces are trying to change Nebraska's unique electoral system and force a winner-takes-all approach on the state. If Nebraska abandons its current method of

distributing electoral votes, Maine will become the focal point of an intense pressure campaign to do so as well. This campaign would distract precious time and resources from the issues Mainers expect and deserve us to address.

I support LD 1356 because I believe it sends a message to these national political forces that they shouldn't come into our states and dictate how our voices are heard; and I believe passing it is the best way to protect our current system.

I urge you to vote Ought to Pass.

Thank you.