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Testimony of the Maine Municipal Association

In “Conditional” Support For

LD 1527 - An Act to Require Postage Prepaid Envelopes Be Provided for the Return of Absentee Ballots
April 16, 2025

Senator Hickman, Representative Supica and members of the Veterans and Legal Affairs Committee, my name is Rebecca Lambert, and I am providing testimony in conditional support for LD 1527, because the Maine Municipal Association’s (MMA) elected 70-member Legislative Policy Committee (LPC) will establish its official position later today. Based on the results of a preliminary poll, we offer the following testimony.

For reference, MMA is a nonpartisan, nonprofit member service organization and aims to help provide policy solutions that work for all residents in Maine and the LPC guides the advocacy efforts and establishes positions on bills of municipal interest.

Maine is a well-known leader when it comes to voter participation. Likewise, Maine’s municipal officials are dedicated to upholding the accessibility and integrity of the electoral process for its residents. LD 1527 would ensure that every eligible voter can participate without undue burden.

Requiring the Secretary of State to provide prepaid return envelopes would eliminate financial and logistical barriers that disproportionately affect seniors, individuals with disabilities, and residents in rural areas or with limited resources, ensuring that economic status does not dictate participation.

Other states have recognized the benefits of prepaid return envelopes. For example, California implemented this measure statewide in 2019, and South Carolina adopted prepaid postage for absentee ballots during the 2020 general election to facilitate voter access amidst the pandemic.¹

Implementing prepaid return envelopes for absentee ballots would be a pragmatic step toward fostering an inclusive voting environment and reflects the dedication to providing accessible elections and upholding democratic values.

Thank you for your time and for considering the municipal perspective on this issue.

¹ https://www.postandcourier.com/politics/sc-election-officials-agree-to-provide-prepaid-postage-for-absentee-ballots/article_5fc3fc2-c1ed-11ea-a66c-835742fd1988.html



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