

TO: The Honorable Craig Hickman
The Honorable Laura Supica, Co-Chairs
Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs

DATE: April 24, 2025

RE: LD 1666 An Act to Include in the Ranked-choice Election Method for General and Special Elections the Offices of Governor, State Senator and State Representative and to Make Other Related Changes

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

My name is Ann Luther. I am a resident of Trenton, and I am here today as a volunteer for the League of Women Voters of Maine to support LD 1666. I was part of the League's project beginning in 2008 to study ranked choice voting. I was part of the consensus of League members that endorsed RCV in 2011. I testified before this committee of the Legislature in 2013 in favor of RCV. I convened the working group that same year that eventually spun off the effort to pass RCV by citizen initiative. I worked for its passage then, and I have defended its implementation every year since.

I still believe.

I believe that RCV is one of the most important electoral reforms that Maine could have adopted in the 21st century.¹ Why?

- RCV ensures a majority winner.
- It minimizes strategic voting, prevents government from being captured by a strident minority, and encourages candidates and parties to appeal to a broad swath of constituents.
- It allows voters to express their sincere preferences among candidates and eliminates spoiler effects.

In short, RCV is most likely to elect a candidate with broad, not polarizing, appeal. Primarily for that reason, RCV is overwhelmingly popular with Maine people, has passed by a sizable majority not once, but twice at referendum, and continues to enjoy broad support.

¹ I am not alone. In their publication, *Our Common Purpose*, the American Academy of Arts & Sciences came to the same conclusion. <https://www.amacad.org/ourcommonpurpose/report/section/6>

LD 1666 brings forward a carefully considered opportunity to revisit the original RCV statutory language and reframe the arguments by which our people have been denied the full benefits of RCV in elections for Maine's highest state offices.

I hope the Legislature will take this opportunity to re-open the question and ask the Maine Supreme Court to revisit its prior opinion in light of subsequent developments.