

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 Relate Changes

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

My name is Anne Summer, and I live in Scarborough, Maine. I am testifying in support of LD1666. I support this bill because I believe anyone who wishes to serve as an elected official anywhere in Maine should receive the backing of at least more than half of the people voting for that position. Ranked choice voting has provided the process by which this can occur.

This is the critical point for me because I think the primary job for every successful legislative and gubernatorial candidate is, ultimately, to work together as a part of a continuously learning, governing body, committed to serving and ensuring the safety and wellbeing of ALL Maine's residents. Years ago, I learned the adage that those who govern do so, only with the consent of the governed. If the ranges of Maine's bipartisan, gubernatorial election results for the past decades are considered, 37% or a few more or less, never sounded like "enough consent."

I also support this bill because I believe the RCV method influences campaigning behaviors for the better as well. It's possible to see, from campaign through the elections, whether candidates have, or are acquiring, the knowledge, skills, and attitudes they will need to legislate, govern, and carry out ALL the work on ALL our behalves. Once RCV was in play, I thought there was more issue-focused advertising, far less name-calling and mud-slinging among the candidates, and, the candidates seemed more aware of/willing to reference each other's campaigns or positions. I was particularly interested in candidates who indicated an openness to more collegial, and less cut-throat determinations of election outcomes.

I'm in favor of this bill because I've found the ranked choice process interesting, and I've enjoyed it. I moved to Maine in 1993, so I have been able to vote in both the "old fashioned" way, and by using the ranked choice voting method, as it became available. One of its unadvertised benefits is that I think it has its own, inbuilt feedback mechanism, allowing

candidates, and voters to view and analyze outcomes to their hearts' content. I took extra time before the election to think about, and compare the candidates (when we have that luxury); that seemed respectful and appropriate. In the voting booth, it took only seconds to mark the ballots with my choices. I remember thinking the first time I used the RCV, that if a meteor suddenly fell on my candidate's head, at least now I had a back-up candidate and we wouldn't need another election. Less expensive, maybe.

My last reason to support this bill is that we need more people willing to run for elected office. I believe RCV creates an invitational, leadership, and collaborative environment which should appeal to folks interested in serving and learning public policy.

I urge the committee to support this bill. Thank you for your time and the opportunity to submit this testimony.

Respectfully,

Anne M. Summer

Scarborough Maine

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Scarborough
LD 1666

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