

Averil Fessenden
Brunswick
LD 1149

Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs

DATE: May 2, 2025

RE: LD 1149 An Act to Require an Individual to Present Photographic Identification For the Purpose of Voting

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

My name is Averil Fessenden and I live in Brunswick, Maine. I am testifying to oppose LD 1149 because this bill will make it more difficult for people to vote and aims to prevent a problem that does not exist. There is no significant evidence of voter fraud in Maine or in our whole country.

This bill will result in fewer people voting because:

It bans the use of IDs currently allowed - student IDs, tribal IDs and others

It bans ongoing absentee voting (in which a voter can sign up to receive an absentee ballot automatically for each election cycle)

It limits the use and number of absentee ballot drop-boxes so that some towns may find it impractical to offer them

It doesn't allow third parties to deliver absentee ballots

It doesn't allow requesting an absentee ballot over the phone

All of these services help young people, the elderly, disabled people, veterans and rural Mainers to vote. People rely on these to vote, which is their privilege and responsibility. Absentee voting will be much more difficult if this bill passes.

I observed people voting in several smaller polling places in the election of 2024. I was able to see orderly, careful processes with election officials enforcing rules and helping people to obey them, respectfully. There were no irregularities. We have a solid system for reliable voting -let's keep it going by not making it harder to vote.

Maine has a strong, secure voting system with one of the best turnout rates in the nation. I want to preserve our good voting record in our state - it is safe and encourages participation.

I urge tthe committee to oppose this bill. Thank you for your time and the opportunity to testify.