

LD1449 Public Hearing May 2, 2025

Senator Hickman, Representative Supica and members of the Veterans and Legal Affairs Committee my name is John Howard and I am from Lisbon, Maine. I am here to ask you to vote ought not to pass on LD. I am grateful for the many ways you have made Public Hearings accessible to our citizens, such as this zoom testimony. Shouldn't we take just as much care to make our voting process as accessible as possible? We as a state and you as legislators have made great improvements in this matter in recent years. This referendum reverses that progress in many ways. It would have severe negative impact on the ability of seniors and Mainers with disabilities. I envy countries like Australia that require voting of its citizenship the way we require jury duty here. If all eligible Maine citizens were required to vote, you can bet we'd be implementing more ways to modernize and streamline the process, not less. Just having the drop boxes visible in many locations increases the trust our citizens have in our system. We are encouraged to participate knowing our voice is valued and sought.

My congregation at home strongly believes in the values of democracy, and I know many churches feel this is a matter of faith and values.

Please vote 'ought not to pass' on LD 1449 and send this measure to the ballot where voters can reject it. We have worked hard to get these absentee ballot measures passed into law. With public confidence in our democracy slipping, this is the wrong message to send. Thank you for your time.

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Lisbon
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