

Natalia Jacobs
Lewiston
LD 1149

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

My name is Natalia Jacobs and I live in Lewiston, Maine. I am here to ask you to vote ought not to pass on LD 1149 and send this measure to the ballot where voters can reject it.

This bill, if passed, scares me for a number of reasons. The nature of this bill would strengthen the ongoing voter suppression efforts in our country that Maine has bravely been combatting, and create unnecessary barriers preventing eligible Maine voters from the polls. For example, if passed, this bill would prevent voters from calling their town clerk to request a ballot, making it harder for those without reliable transportation or internet (two barriers that are the reality for many Mainers) to request an absentee ballot. This bill would require a Maine state driver's license or ID, passport, or military ID. These are forms of identification that cost money, time, and resources to get, resources that are not accessible for many eligible Maine voters. Furthermore, this bill would eliminate ongoing absentee ballots, even though this has been a critical resource for Maine seniors and Mainers with disabilities. It would also cut the time period for early absentee voting by two days - two of the most popular days for early absentee voting. To add even more barriers, LD 1149 would prevent absentee voters from allowing a trusted third-party, such as a friend or family member, to drop off their ballot. From personal experience, I know how important having a trusted third party drop off a ballot has been to the seniors in my life. Maine is a state that prides itself in the trust and value it places in our communities. This bill would directly contradict Maine values by taking away local control by limiting the number of secure ballot drop-off boxes a town may offer.

It is our right as citizens to vote. No one should have that right taken away because of their access to transportation, internet, or mobility. Is this truly how we honor our seniors and veterans—by denying them the right to vote in the very country they have served? A country that prides itself on the democratic values this bill directly violates?

In respect for our communities, our state, and our inherent democratic rights, please vote ought not to pass on LD 1149. We have entrusted you to serve us. Please do by defending our right to vote.

Thank you for your time,
Natalia Jacobs