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LD 1149

I am writing in opposition to LD1149. Although requiring a photo ID seems innocuous, in fact the proposed law is an attempt to make voting more difficult for American citizens living in Maine. Most egregiously through its restrictions on absentee voting. If safeguarding the vote were the actual purpose, then rather than sponsoring a voter suppression bill, these Maine lawmakers would be celebrating Maine's highly effective and secure voting system. Maine has one of the nation's highest voter turnout, in large part because we facilitate voter participation. Voter fraud is rare and readily identifiable because of Maine's many layers of election security. LD1149 is a voter suppression bill pretending to be the solution to a voter fraud problem which does not exist. Why break what works - while putting undue burdens on Mainers and unnecessary expense on the state? Because, to suppress voter participation, for decades the Charles Koch funded Heritage Foundation has pushed debunked voter fraud conspiracies. They now feature in Project 2025 and the SAVE Act, and dovetail with Donald Trump's Big Lie of a stolen election, and Pres. Trump's recent Executive Order which the courts have found unconstitutional. Through a combination of unrealistic and excessively burdensome restrictions, LD1149 will disenfranchise many Mainers - especially rural voters, older voters, military voters, tribal voters, survivors of natural disasters, the tens of millions of married people who have changed their names, and have moved residences. It will also effectively prohibit our options for mail-in and absentee voting. Existing federal and state laws are successfully limiting voting to eligible American citizens and are also preventing voter fraud. Notably here in Maine. Maine has proven that safeguarding our freedom to vote, while making voting more accessible to eligible Americans, is a winning combination for all of us. Our elected officials should support Maine's success, protect our existing law, and reject voter suppression tactics such as LD1149. DIRIGO