

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

My name is Kimberly Simmons and I am from Portland. I am writing to ask you to vote ought not to pass on LD 1149.

I grew up in Maine, and spent many hours with my grandparents, a bipartisan pair. Although they voted differently, they shared many core civic values, including the importance of the freedom to vote and to have their vote be private. (My grandmother was born just ahead of suffrage so she *really* knew how significant her single vote was to prior and future generations). We have all been proud that Maine has [relatively high](#) levels of voting for a country with [low levels overall](#), and it really saddens me that protecting basic voting rights is now considered the job of Democrats. We should restore a fundamental pride in voting as a universal value.

I have used absentee voting for so many extremely good reasons, including the years that my children were small and I couldn't reliably be anywhere at anytime, and the years I was lucky enough to travel, and the years I worked on election day in ways that I knew might make it difficult to vote, and more recent years when I've worried I might get sick or feared my own parents might have an emergency and keep me from voting. In general, we simply do not live in a way that accommodates a single day of voting and it makes all the sense to maintain the systems that work better, rather than dismantling it.

The notion that voting fraud is a problem in Maine has been challenged and proven false over and over again. I presume the reason to continue raising it is simply fear-mongering and lowering trust in Government overall, a tactic to break Democracy. It is truly so disappointing when we have such real and complex problems we need to face together.

I hope that LD 1149 is not only defeated, but that those pushing it must grapple more fully with the dangerous web they weave - we truly do not need a more excluding and authoritarian State and we should be able to cultivate pride in high voting rates in Maine this year and beyond.

Thank you,
Kimberly Simmons, PhD