

Testimony of Sarah Woodbury, Vice President of Policy and Advocacy  
In OPPOSITION to LD 1149, "An Act to Require an Individual to Present Photographic  
Identification for the Purpose of Voting"  
Before the Committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs  
May 2nd, 2025

Senator Hickman, Representative Supica and members of the Veterans and Legal Affairs Committee, my name is My name is Sarah Woodbury, and I am the vice president of policy and advocacy for Defend Our Health. Defend works to create a world where all people are healthy and thriving, with equal access to safe food and drinking water, healthy homes, and toxic-free, climate-friendly products. I am speaking in opposition to LD 1149 "An Act to Require an Individual to Present Photographic Identification for the Purpose of Voting."

Our ability to protect our environment, build healthy and safe communities and succeed economically are all dependent on our ability to express our concerns, needs, hopes, and aspirations at the ballot box. When the whole community is in dialogue and everyone has a voice, we can make policy that represents everyone's needs. When we exclude voters by making voting arbitrarily harder, we silence members of our community and head down the road towards policies that hurt our vulnerable friends and neighbors. Maintaining easy access to the vote for all Mainers should be a primary goal for this committee.

LD 1149 proposes to make voting significantly challenging for elderly and disabled Mainers, busy working parents, people who travel for work, Mainers whose housing is insecure, young Mainers and members of our Tribal communities. The bill proposes to significantly reduce access to absentee ballots, which are a critical tool in engaging people who cannot make it to the polls because of scheduling constraints, mobility and transportation issues. The bill arbitrarily forbids people from requesting an absentee ballot over the phone, which presents additional challenges to busy or home-bound Mainers who lack reliable internet access.

If you are lucky enough to be eligible for an absentee ballot, this bill also makes it significantly harder for you to drop off your ballot. It forbids you from allowing a trusted friend or family member from dropping off your ballot for you. This makes it harder for the elderly, those that are ill or housebound, or unable for some other reason to drop off to cast a ballot. The bill erodes the principal of local control by preventing towns from investing in ballot postage and arbitrarily limiting the number and location of the ballot boxes.

We should be making it as easy as possible for people to exercise their constitutional right to vote, not harder. Please vote "ought not to pass" on LD 1149, and send this bill to the ballot so Mainers can celebrate their free and unencumbered right to vote by likewise rejecting this proposal.