



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MAINE

Coalition Applauds Rejection of Voter ID; Skeptical About Need for Study

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AUGUSTA – The Legal and Veterans Affairs Committee today voted to table LD 199, which would require voters to present a photo ID before voting, and are considering action that would turn the bill into a study of Maine’s electoral system.

“Thousands of Mainers, and especially older Mainers, don’t have access to a photo ID,” said John Hennessy of the AARP of Maine. “These folks have been voting in their communities for decades, but could have been turned away from the voting booth for no good reason. The committee deserves tremendous credit for looking beyond politics to put aside voter ID.”

Secretary of State Charlie Summers also presented a report to the Legislature today that identified potential clerical and procedural errors in the state’s Central Voter Registration System.

“The Secretary of State is entrusted to protect the right of Mainers to vote and already has the authority and the obligation to ensure that elections are administered appropriately,” said Shenna Bellows. “If there are administrative problems, then the Secretary of State should fix them now without any further study.”

The Secretary of State also suggested that some undetermined number of votes may have been cast inappropriately during the last few years.

“Maine elections are well-run and secure, and they have helped our state to become a national leader in voter participation,” said Ann Luther of the League of Women Voters of Maine. “If the Secretary of State has identified isolated problems, then he should investigate them now and make sure that anyone who has violated the law is prosecuted. A study is unnecessary because he already has that responsibility and authority.”

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