



TO: The Honorable Craig Hickman
The Honorable Laura Supica, Co-Chairs
Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs

DATE: May 17, 2023

RE: LD 1502 – An Act to Provide Consistency of Process for Maine's Electoral Votes by Prohibiting Enactment of the National Popular Vote Interstate Compact

Good morning Senator Hickman and Representative Supica.

My name is Will Hayward. I'm a resident of Portland. I am here today as the Advocacy Program Coordinator for the League of Women Voters of Maine. I am testifying in opposition on LD 1502.

The League of Women Voters of Maine is a nonpartisan political organization that has been working since 1920 to encourage informed and active participation in government, to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and to influence public policy through education and advocacy. We never support or oppose any political party or candidate

LD 1502 seeks to prohibit this and future state legislatures from enacting the National Popular Vote Interstate Compact as long as ranked choice voting is used for any election in the state.

The League supports the National Popular Vote Interstate Compact, and we look forward to the passage of that nonpartisan legislation by the 131st Legislature. NPV ensures that no candidate who fails to win the national popular vote will win the presidency, that every vote in Maine, and in every state, will be equal and politically relevant, that neither district nor state lines will act as barriers to any citizen's vote for the office of president, and that presidential candidates will seek to win the vote of every citizen, not just those in swing states.

LD 1502 provides no rationale for stripping ranked choice voting from every election in the state as a prerequisite for enactment of NPV. Mainer voters have been using RCV since 2018. A FairVote November 2022 poll found that 82% of Mainers said RVC was easy or very easy; and that in 2022 40% of Republican voters ranked a second candidate choice, up from just short of one third of Republican voters in 2018.¹

Ranked Choice Voting works seamlessly with NPV, and is incorporated in the NPV bill, LD 1578. Once NPV is enacted, Ranked Choice Voting ballot counting will proceed in rounds to the top two candidates. LD 1578 provides that the vote counts of the top two vote recipients will be recorded and certified toward the determination of the national popular vote.

¹ https://fairvote.org/maine_2022_poll/ "New Poll Shows Impact of Ranked Choice Voting in Maine."

Retaining RCV within the NPV compact provides each voter the opportunity to voice their ranked preferences for all the presidential candidates on the ballot, thus ensuring that every Mainer's vote will be heard and be politically relevant when added to the certified votes of the candidates across all 50 states and DC.

The League of Women Voters of Maine continues to strongly support both RCV and NPV, and we urge the Committee to designate LD 1502 as Ought Not to Pass.