



TO: The Honorable Louis Luchini  
The Honorable Chris Caiazzo, Co-Chairs  
Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs

DATE: January 12, 2022

RE: LD 1830 An Act To Amend the Election Laws

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Good morning Senator Luchini, Representative Caiazzo, and members of the committee.

My name is Ann Luther. I'm a resident of Trenton. I am here today as a volunteer on behalf of the League of Women Voters of Maine. I am testifying in support of LD 1830.

The League of Women Voters of Maine is a nonpartisan political organization that has been working for over 100 years 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.

The League advocates for full voter participation by all eligible American citizens, and we oppose efforts to create new barriers that block citizens' constitutional right to vote. The League believes that elections should be secure, accurate, recountable, accessible, and transparent. And finally, we support measures that contribute to the smooth conduct of elections. From that standpoint, the measures in this bill are unobjectionable. We would like to highlight just a couple:

Section 1 allows tribal ID cards to be used as acceptable proof of identity for an applicant who is registering to vote. We enthusiastically support this measure, believing that it will reduce barriers to voting for many eligible people.

Section 4 permits the Secretary of State to designate procedures that deviate from statutory requirements for absentee balloting in certain nursing homes, residential care facilities and assisted living programs during a declared statewide health emergency. We are generally supportive of this measure, but we wonder about including provisions for a localized outbreak affecting only a single institution. A local flu outbreak, for example, might cause a single institution to quarantine, making it dangerous for either residents or election officials to have election officials enter the facility. We would not want such a circumstance to create a barrier to voting for those residents, nor would we want it to create a risk for election officials.

Sections 7 and 8 seem intended to keep the citizen initiative process moving expeditiously and avoid unnecessary delays. We support the constitutional right of Maine people to engage in the citizen initiative process. These measures seem appropriate.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. I would be happy to answer any questions from the Committee.