



Veterans and Legal Affairs
c/o Karen Montell
State House, Room 437
c/o Legislative Information Office
100 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333

Re: LD253:

Dear Senator Luchini, Representative Caiazzo, and other members of the Veterans and Legal Affairs Committee,

My name is Jerry Marx. I am a resident of Portland and Executive Director of the Maine Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers. There are over 5,000 licensed social workers providing health services to individuals and families throughout the state. In addition, NASW Maine is also a strong supporter of social justice and human rights.

NASW Maine opposes LD253. It is my understanding that LD253 requires that a voter provide proof of identity for the purpose of voting with photographic identification approved by the Secretary of State by rule. NASW Maine is opposed to this bill for several reasons. One is that the bill does not explicitly address how providing a photo identification would work with absentee ballots. Having this voting option is critically important for older and disabled Maine residents or in times of national emergencies such as the recent Covid-19 pandemic. Secondly, NASW Maine opposes this bill because it will make it more difficult for Maine residents to exercise their Constitutional right to vote whether they choose the in-person traditional method of voting or cast an absentee ballot.

Our state elected officials and government agencies should be making it easier for Maine residents to vote, not harder! For these reasons, I urge all committee members to vote "No" on this bill.

Respectfully submitted,

Jerry Marx, PhD
Executive Director
NASW Maine Chapter
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