



Senate Committee on Government Operations
30 January 2015

RE: S.20, An act relating to election day registration

The League of Women Voters is a long-time supporter of same-day voter registration, and I am here today in support of S.29.

The primary reason for election-day voter registration is to encourage voter participation. Same day registration does exactly that. According to Demos, in states with EDR, average voter turnout in non-presidential election years between 1980 and 2012 was 10% higher than in non-EDR states. Maine's experience reflects this trend, with increases between 5 and 10 percent.

The number of states with election-day registration has doubled since it was last addressed by this legislature. It works, and people like it.

Maine was a pioneer in EDR. In 2010 the legislature voted to repeal same day registration, but that was overturned by a People's Veto (part of the initiative and referendum process) in 2011.

We already grant same-day registration for voters who register to vote during the 45-day early voting period.

Same-day registration offers those who have recently moved an opportunity to register and vote with their new address. Same-day registration would also reduce the number of provisional ballots and save the time and expense of processing those votes.

We want to encourage civic participation. Why put obstacles in the way of doing something we want people to do?

