

Testimony of Timothy Belcher  
Executive Director, Maine State Employees Association, SEIU Local 1989  
In Support of LD 1799:  
"An Act To Establish Open Ballot Voting in Maine"  
April 23, 2007

Senator Marrache, Representative Patrick, members of the Joint Standing Committee on Legal and Veterans' Affairs,

My name is Timothy Belcher, and I'm the Executive Director of the Maine State Employees Association, SEIU Local 1989. I urge you to support L.D. 1799: "An Act To Establish Open Ballot Voting in Maine." I would submit that the real test for this bill is whether it diminishes or enhances the voters' voice in the political system.

This bill would permit parties and voters to participate in the political process exactly as they have in the past, if they feel the current system works for them. We all know, however, the current system does not work for everyone. Too many citizens don't participate, or otherwise feel alienated or frustrated by the political process. This bill is for them. It would allow them to associate with others holding similar views in minor parties, while retaining the ability to join in coalition with major parties. The effect will be to enhance the voters' voice, creating a richer political system, and engaging voters who are currently disaffected.

For these reasons, we urge you to vote "ought to pass."