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**Testimony in support of LD 1463,  
to the Joint Committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs,  
April 24, 2019**

Senator Luchini, Rep Schneck, members of the Committee.

My name is Peter Lehman. I live in Thomaston.

I am here testifying on behalf of the Maine Unitarian Universalist church's State Advocacy Network. We are a faith-based organization that seeks to support and protect our democratic institutions. We urge you to support LD 1463.

As people of faith, our first principle is the inherent worth and dignity of all people. We are all children of the same God. That's why we are so strong in our theological support of democracy: inherent worth and dignity means that all people should have a VOICE. This bill extends voice by automatically registering citizens through the Bureau of Motor Vehicles.

Essentially what this bill does is to eliminate duplication of the State's collection of the personal information which is required for voter registration. Currently, that information is repetitively collected, at the expense of the State and the inconvenience of citizens. AVR makes the State more efficient.

In addition, it lowers the barriers for people to vote. This expands the number of voters and the voices that can contribute to their community. More people registered to vote means more people involved, higher participation rates, and expanding democracy. We believe that is a good thing.

It also has the practical effects of making our voting rolls more accurate and up-to-date while improving efficiency. And it lessens the burden on over-worked town clerks.

This bill supports and extends democracy and gives people a voice. I urge you to vote Ought to Pass.

Thank you for your attention and support.