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**Testimony in support of LD 211,
to the Joint Committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs,
April 3, 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 211.

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.

Some voters are able to vote in primaries. Others are not. This gives them less voice.

If you can't vote in the primaries, you get less voice in what choices you get in the general election.

We all pay for the primaries—including the unenrolled who are excluded from them.

These people have chosen not to enroll in either of the major parties. If they want to participate, they need to pay a toll. That toll is **pretending** that they want to align with a party in order to vote in the election. This is a lot like being required to lie in order to gain a voice.

This bill allows everyone to vote in the primaries that they pay for. It allows unenrolled voters to have a say, to have a voice, in who gets on the ballot. In other words, it increases their voice, their participation. And, by the way, it increases the likelihood they will vote in the general election.

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.