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**Testimony in support of**

**LD 1033, "An Act to Eliminate the 24-hour Reporting Requirement under the Election Laws"**

**Joint Standing Committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs**

**March 27, 2017**

Representative Luchini and fellow members of the Joint Standing Committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs, I am Senate Majority Leader Garrett Mason and I am before you today as the sponsor of LD 1033, "An Act to Eliminate the 24-hour Reporting Requirement under the Election Laws."

As the law currently stands, a candidate must file a 24-hour report when they receive a contribution of \$1,000 or more, or make an expenditure of \$1,000 or more in the 13 days prior to an election. For ballot question committees, political action committees, and political party committees, a 24-hour report must be filed when a contribution of \$5,000 or more is received or expenditures of \$1,000 or more are made after the 14th day leading up to the election.

During the days of matching funds, 48-hour reporting, which was later amended to 24-hours, was very relevant. These reports insured that candidates were on a level playing field when it came to campaign financing. However, after a Supreme Court ruling and the elimination of matching funds in Maine, I do not believe that 24-hour reporting is still necessary.

Those subject to 24-hour reporting have to report this information twice. First, they report these contributions and expenditures during that window leading up the election and then again in a 42-Day Post-General report. As we all know, the final days of a general election are taxing on candidates. Things sometime fall through the cracks. If a candidate fails to file a 24-hour report

for any reason, they will be fined. They will also be fined if they fail to file it during that window of time, but do file that contribution or expenditure in the 42-Day Post-General report.

There have also been times when unopposed candidates have been fined for not filing an expenditure over \$1,000 during the 24-hour period. I understand candidates need to be held to the same standard; however we get into murky water when we're fining unopposed candidates. If you were an unopposed candidate, your campaign made an expenditure, and reported it on the regular report, is that not enough? As an unopposed candidate, who was harmed by that expenditure, how was it not transparent?

Not only is 24-hour reporting irrelevant today, I also find this process to be redundant and at times confusing for new candidates and committees. In addition, it creates an unnecessary amount of paperwork for campaigns during an already busy season in politics.

The bill before you does not change rules around independent expenditures or post-election reports; it simply gets rid of 24-hour reporting.

Thank you for your time and consideration of LD 1033. I am happy to answer any questions and look forward to working with you on this legislation.