



CITY OF SOUTH PORTLAND

RICHARD T. MATTHEWS
Mayor

SCOTT T. MORELLI
City Manager

JESSICA A. HUGHES
City Clerk

BRANDON MAZER
Corporation Counsel

District One
LINDA C. COHEN

District Two
RACHAEL COLEMAN

District Three
MISHA C. PRIDE

District Four
JESSICA L. WALKER

District Five
ELYSE C. TIPTON

At Large
RICHARD T. MATTHEWS

At Large
NATALIE E. WEST

**IN CITY COUNCIL
RESOLVE #3 25/26**

**RESOLUTION IN OPPOSITION TO QUESTION 1
ON THE NOVEMBER 4, 2025 BALLOT**

WHEREAS, the City of South Portland conducts two elections every year and three during presidential years, affording its 20,293 registered voters an opportunity to vote in person on election day, in person before the election at City Hall, and by mail following mandated procedures to ensure that the electoral process is safe; and

WHEREAS, half the votes cast in the November 2024 election were cast using in person absentee voting or absentee voting by mail, 8,240 of the total 16,163 votes; and

WHEREAS, the current election process in South Portland is a secure and established process that protects the rights and interests of its residents; and

WHEREAS, Question 1 on the November 4, 2025 state ballot proposes changes to existing election laws that would negatively impact local governance and increase the costs of local elections by eliminating two days of absentee voting, prohibiting requests for absentee ballots by phone or family members, ending ongoing absentee voter status for seniors and people with disabilities, banning prepaid postage on absentee ballot return envelopes, limiting the number of drop boxes, requiring voters to show certain photo ID before voting and as part of absentee voting, and make other changes to our elections; and

WHEREAS, Question 1 would impede the effective conduct of elections in South Portland in ways that include but are not limited to the following:

1. Significantly changing the way that absentee ballots are applied for, distributed, and processed upon their return which would require the Clerk to revise procedures that have been used effectively for many years, retrain staff to understand the new procedures, and develop

systems for requiring additional information and processing of ballots.

2. Preventing the City Clerk or two members of her staff from emptying the drop box outside of City Hall and instead require that a “bipartisan team of election officials” empty the drop box which was used by 3,634 voters in November 2024 and was emptied as many as four times a day. This would increase the burden of conducting the election by requiring the Clerk to determine what is a “bipartisan team” and assure the “bipartisan team” comes to City Hall multiple times a day.
3. Increasing the time spent by the Clerk and her staff in reviewing absentee ballot requests by adding additional information to the request, which information would apparently be required even if a voter comes in person to City Hall to cast a ballot as an “in person absentee voter,” a process followed by 3,461 voters in South Portland in the November 2024 election.
4. Requiring the City Clerk to review the additional information required on absentee ballot requests and then mandating that the clerk to contact the voter and attempt to correct any deficiencies, delaying voting by those who mail in their ballots.
5. Adding additional administrative responsibility to city staff by eliminating South Portland’s fifty-five (55) ongoing absentee ballot requests and requiring voters to make a new request every election.
6. Requiring those who vote absentee, including those who come to City Hall and vote in person, to record their drivers license number or non-driver ID number or include a photocopy of their picture ID with the absentee ballot.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the City Council finds that the passage of Question 1 on the November 4, 2025 state ballot would significantly increase the staff time and expense of conducting local elections and reduce financial and human resources that are needed for other city programs.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the City Council of South Portland on this 21st day of October, 2025.

Fiscal Note: Less than \$1000

Date: October 21, 2025