2 June 2017

The 128th Legislature of the State of Maine
State House
Augusta, ME

Dear Honorable Members of the 128th Legislature:

Under the authority vested in me by Article IV, Part Third, Section 2 of the Constitution of the State of Maine, I am hereby vetoing LD 613, “An Act To Protect Job Applicants from Identity Theft.”

This bill adds the word “benefits” to the list of reasons items individuals can refuse to provide their Social Security number. The law is now unclear as to whether the current protections are adequate to protect a person if they refuse to write their Social Security number on a job application.

Employers must collect and employees must provide Social Security numbers at several stages of the employment process: on background or credit check authorization forms, federal and state income tax withholding forms, federal I-9 work authorization forms, health insurance forms and other benefits paperwork.

I am a strong advocate of personal privacy. In this day and age, especially with hacking, ransomware and data breaches increasingly common occurrences, employers should limit their collection and use of Social Security numbers to matters already expressly authorized in law. This is common sense. When such a request is not authorized by law, then an individual has the right to refuse to provide it. That, too, requires no law. It is taking responsibility for your personal privacy.

For this reason, I return LD 613 unsigned and vetoed. I strongly urge the Legislature to sustain it.

Sincerely,

Paul R. LePage
Governor