

John Lewis
Cape Elizabeth
LD 1748

Dear Respective Members of the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee,

I am writing to you on LD 1748: An Act to Reform the School Budget Referendum Process by Limiting the Circumstances in Which Referenda Occur. If enacted, this bill would result in a rubber stamp on every school budget moving forward, by default, and disenfranchise voters from participating in the democratic process.

Currently, each community has the ability to determine their school budget validation process. LD 1748 overrides this ability. This ongoing effort to centralize government only diminishes and devalues the individual and the individual communities.

Here in Cape Elizabeth, our school budget validation process was on the ballot last June. Voters overwhelmingly supported sending the school budget to a town-wide vote and renewed the process for another three years. Like Cape Elizabeth, every community deserves this right to decide what works best for its unique circumstance.

In a time where Mainers are having to deal with inflation and the high costs of every day items, LD 1748 would force increased taxes on the people without their input. This lack of transparency and discouragement of engagement is alarming. Instead, if there is displeasure with the new budget LD 1748 would require the citizens to partake in a petition drive that involves considerable commitment.

It is for the above reasons I am encouraging a vote of Ought Not to Pass.

Thank you,

John Lewis
Cape Elizabeth, ME