



# Maine County Commissioners Association

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April 9, 2025

Sen. Joseph Baldacci, Chair  
Rep. Suzanne Salisbury, Chair  
Joint Standing Committee on State &  
Local Government  
100 State House Station  
Augusta, ME 04333

Re: ***LD 1302, An Act Regarding the Number of Voters of a Municipality Required to Petition for Consideration of Deorganization of That Municipality***

Dear Members of the State and Local Government Committee:

On behalf of the Maine County Commissioners Association, we appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony to the Committee in support of LD 1302. LD 1302 helps the smallest of Maine municipalities be able to hold deorganization votes without being trapped by voter minimums they cannot meet. We believe this is the fair and democratic way to address the challenge of Maine's smallest communities.

**About MCCA.** Briefly, the Maine County Commissioners Association was established in 1890 to assist Maine's county government in providing vital services to Maine citizens in a responsive, efficient, and credible manner. The Association is based in Augusta, represents all 16 of Maine's counties, and is governed by a board with representation from each participating county.

**What does LD 1302 do?** LD 1302 removes the requirement that at least ten voters must sign a petition to begin the process of deorganizing a municipality. This change allows municipalities with very few voters to initiate the deorganization process under the same statutory framework as larger towns.

**Discussion.** Under current law, the statutory requirement that at least ten voters must sign a petition to initiate the deorganization process can be an obstacle for the smallest municipalities, some of which may have very few voters. LD 1302 retains the requirement that at least 50% of a municipality's voters must sign the petition to proceed with deorganization. However, by eliminating the ten-voter minimum requirement, LD 1302 ensures that all municipalities, regardless of population, have the same ability to initiate the deorganization process when local circumstances warrant such consideration.

Imagine a plantation with 40 people, only 25 of whom are registered to vote, and only 16 of them voted in the prior gubernatorial election. In such instance, the community would need 8 voters to request the commencement of the deorganization process, but because of the 10 voter minimum, they would need 10/16 voters to commence the process, or 62.5% of their voters. For smaller communities, the threshold burden would be even higher, potentially even preventing deorganization altogether if the community had fewer than 10 voters.

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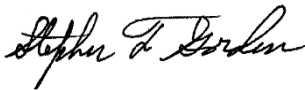
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Given the increasingly higher burden placed on small communities through the 10 voter threshold to commence deorganization, MCCA supports removing the 10 voter minimum so that all communities, regardless of size, are allowed to consider whether deorganization is in their best interest.

For those communities who do decide to deorganize, they would become part of Maine's unorganized territories, and local governance would be undertaken by county government. For those communities who believe this is in their best interest, we believe it is important to allow them to make this choice – including the very smallest of these communities.

**Conclusion.** We respectfully ask the Committee to support this legislation. Thank you, and please let us know if you have questions or need additional information.

Respectfully submitted,



Stephen Gorden  
Co-Chair, Legislative Policy Committee, MCCA



Jean-Marie Caterina  
Co-Chair, Legislative Policy Committee, MCCA

cc: Commissioner Andre Cushing, President, MCCA  
James I. Cohen, Verrill Dana, LLP, MCCA Legislative Counsel

