

Jeremy Nichols
Milo
LD 1579

Chair, Members of the Committee:

I am writing to express my strong opposition to LD 1579, “An Act to Abolish School Budget Referenda,” and my strong support for LD 1586, “An Act to Amend the Regional School Unit Budget Validation Referendum Law.”

Regarding LD 1579:

I oppose this bill because it would remove an essential opportunity for voters to review and address each individual warrant article within the school budget. Given that there are typically a dozen or more warrant articles covering various components of the district's budget, it is only reasonable and responsible to allow scrutiny of each item individually. This process ensures transparency, accountability, and community involvement before a final lump-sum vote is taken. Abolishing the referendum process would significantly weaken these important checks.

Regarding LD 1586:

I support this bill because it introduces a simple but crucial improvement: requiring that the actual dollar amount of the school budget be included in the budget validation referendum question. This is common sense. Voters deserve to know precisely what they are being asked to approve. Omitting the dollar figure only serves to confuse or obscure the financial stakes of the decision.

In conclusion, LD 1579 ought not to pass, and LD 1586 ought to pass.

Thank you for considering my testimony.