



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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April 28, 2025

Testimony
In Support of

LD 1573 An Act to Require Legislative Approval for Certain Emergency Powers of the Governor

Senator Baldacci, Representative Salisbury, and the distinguished members of the Committee on State and Local Government, my name is Reagan Paul and I am proud to represent House District 37. Thank you for the opportunity to present LD 1573, “***An Act to Require Legislative Approval for Certain Emergency Powers of the Governor***”, a bill I have introduced to affirm a principle as old as our Republic: that executive authority must always be accountable to the people, and by extension, the people’s representatives.

Over the past several years, Mainers lived through a period in which sweeping decisions affecting every corner of daily life—schools, businesses, worship, and transportation—were made by a single office without consistent legislative oversight. While executive flexibility is essential at the onset of a crisis, no emergency should become a pretext for unending, unilateral rule.

What LD 1573 Does

This bill would prohibit the Governor from unilaterally reissuing, renewing, or slightly modifying a previously expired or legislatively terminated emergency proclamation unless the Legislature explicitly approves it.

To be clear: this legislation does not strip the Governor of the ability to act swiftly during an actual emergency. It simply ensures that if an emergency order is allowed to expire, is struck down by the Legislature, or is functionally duplicated under a new name, that action cannot be repeated without legislative consent. LD 1573 protects against the abuse of a legal loophole where executive power is reasserted by technical means in defiance of legislative will.

Why This Reform Is Needed

The COVID-19 pandemic exposed gaps in our emergency laws. While many Mainers initially supported swift executive action, prolonged mandates without legislative input or approval strained not only public patience, but the very fabric of representative government.

We must ensure that “emergency” does not become a permanent condition in state governance. LD 1573 creates a clear boundary: the executive may lead in crisis, but not in perpetuity, and not without the consent of the Legislature if that crisis extends or reemerges under similar terms.

District 37 Frankfort, Prospect, Searsport, Stockton Springs, Winterport

This reform aligns Maine with a growing number of states across the political spectrum that have sought to restore balance to their emergency governance frameworks. We are not alone in this effort—we are simply doing our duty.

A Nonpartisan Safeguard


LD 1573 is not a rebuke of any one administration, nor is it a partisan maneuver. It is a reaffirmation that in a representative republic, no branch of government operates unchecked. The Legislature is not merely an advisory body—it is a co-equal branch with constitutional duties. This bill recognizes that role and reinforces it.

Conclusion

LD 1573 is a modest and reasonable measure that prevents the overextension of emergency authority while preserving the executive's ability to respond quickly when it matters. It ensures that Mainers' voices, through their elected representatives, remain central to how we govern in times of crisis.

I respectfully request that the committee join me in supporting this bill. I welcome your questions, and thank you for your attention to this critical matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Reagan Paul".

Reagan Paul
State Representative

Reagan Paul
Augusta
LD 1573

Please use this copy of Rep. Paul's testimony for LD 1573. It has been corrected.