

Testimony in Opposition to

LD 1818: RESOLUTION, Proposing an Amendment to the Constitution of Maine to Limit Taxes, Spending or Debt Without Approval by the Voters

May 14, 2025

Chairpersons Senator Grohoski and Representative Cloutier and honorable members of the Taxation Committee:

My name is Kerry Leichtman. I am a Certified Maine Assessor serving the jurisdictions of Camden and Rockport. I am testifying today in opposition to LD 1818.

LD 1818 presupposes that residents of municipalities don't have a say in how funds are raised and spent, when in fact they have multiple opportunities to weigh in on any initiative, the most important of which is they vote to decide who will represent them and their interests. Decisions are discussed and made in open public forums. People can voice support or opposition to any initiative in every town, city or plantation. And, except in a city council form of government, voters also vote on the budget.

LD 1818, it seems to me, will interfere with the process of serving the public. It is similar to LD 1, but even more restrictive. The problem with LD1 wasn't that it attempted to limit budget increases, it was that the program wasn't enforced or evenly applied. Also, it was designed to rein in spending during a period of rapid growth in the late 1990's and early 2000s. Built to contain run-away spending during growth, it crippled municipalities during the recession that followed.

My point is, municipalities need the ability to be flexible to meet the demands of the day. LD 1818 is not only inflexible, but it would make it impossible for a municipality to nimbly tackle problems or take advantage of opportunities as they present themselves.

I urge you to vote Ought Not To Pass on LD 1818.

Thank you for considering my testimony.