



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Testimony of Rep. Bill Bridgeo introducing

**LD 286, An Act to Allow County Commissioners Greater Flexibility When
Establishing a Payment Schedule for Municipalities to Pay County Tax Bills
*Before the State and Local Government Committee***

Senator Baldacci, Representative Salisbury, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on State and Local Government, my name is Bill Bridgeo and I am here this morning to introduce LD 286 – an act that will, if adopted, provide Maine’s county commissioners with some flexibility when it comes to establishing the due dates for municipalities to remit their annual county tax payments – often a major component of their annual municipal budgets.

Right now, as the law is written, a single due date must be established by commissioners in our sixteen counties. LD 286 would allow each board of commissioners – should they so choose – to permit the cities and towns in their county to spread their payment over more than one installment. I stress that it makes it an option of the county commissioners to do so, not a mandate.

Circumstances will certainly vary from county to county – and from municipality to municipality, for that matter. Cash flow demands – both at the municipal and county level – may influence the advisability of such arrangements. In some cases, county commissioners may feel that they lack the fiscal flexibility to allow multiple payments. In other instances, recognizing that some of their municipalities may be experiencing financial challenges due to their own property tax collection schedules or other concerns, commissioners may believe that a phased payment plan is warranted.

It’s no more complicated than that. LD 286 doesn’t infringe on local control. It merely provides a legal mechanism for counties to deal with changing circumstances within their own jurisdictions.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

I’m happy to answer any questions.