

132nd Legislature
Senate of
Maine
Senate District 2

Senator Harold 'Trey' Stewart, III
Senate Republican Leader
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LD 508, "RESOLUTION, Proposing an Amendment to the Constitution of Maine to Require Constitutional Officers to Be Elected by Popular Election"

Joint Standing Committee on State and Local Government
April 7, 2025

Senator Baldacci, Representative Salisbury and Distinguished Members of the Joint Standing Committee on State and Local Government:

I am Trey Stewart; and I represent Senate District 2, which includes several municipalities in Penobscot and Aroostook Counties. I am here to present LD 508, "*Resolution, Proposing an Amendment to the Constitution of Maine to Require Constitutional Officers to Be Elected by Popular Election.*"

Today you are hearing several bills dealing with the same topic of allowing the citizens of Maine to have a voice in electing people to some of our most important statewide positions. This and similar proposals have been introduced in the past and we are long overdue to implement this commonsense change.

Across the country citizens are engaged with electing their Secretary of State, State Treasurer and Attorney General. In fact, Maine is the only state in the country where the legislature elects the Attorney General. I believe many would agree these three very important positions have historically been filled with partisan favor – even electing people who are unequivocally not qualified to do the job. Their successful election was based solely on party affiliation.

Roughly .013% – yes, that's one point three tenths of a percent – of Maine's population should not be the standard-bearer for selecting what should be the most experienced, knowledgeable and qualified person for these offices. That is, 186 members of the legislature should not make the decision. Sharpening that point even more, the members of the majority party (currently 97 people) make the decision on behalf of 1.4 million people regarding who sits in these esteemed positions.

I urge you to thoughtfully consider these bipartisan proposals with an open mind and take into account what is being done across the country and implement a more transparent voice in electing our constitutional officers.

Thank you for your time and attention.