



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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LD1553 RESOLUTION, Proposing an Amendment to the Constitution of Maine to Require a Supermajority of the Legislature to Approve Raising Taxes

*Testimony of Rep. Henderson - Rumford
April 28th, 2025*

Senator Baldacci, Representative Salisbury, and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on State and Local Government. I am Rachel Henderson, and I have the distinct honor of representing the people of District-78 in the Maine House. My district is comprised of the beautiful towns of Bethel, Byron, Hanover, Milton TWP, Roxbury, and my home town of Rumford.

I stand before you today to introduce my bill LD1553 *RESOLUTION, Proposing an Amendment to the Constitution of Maine to Require a Supermajority of the Legislature to Approve Raising Taxes.*

This change is vital to ensuring fiscal stability, protecting taxpayers, and maintaining Maine's economic competitiveness.

Maine's tax policies and fiscal health are at a critical juncture. According to the Maine Revenue Services, our state relies heavily on income and sales taxes, which together comprise approximately 85% of general fund revenue. However, Maine's tax system is ranked as one of the least competitive in New England — placing 44th out of 50 states for overall tax climate, according to the Tax Foundation's 2023 State Business Tax Climate Index.

Furthermore, Maine has experienced fiscal volatility in recent years. The COVID-19 pandemic has led to significant revenue shortfalls, prompting a myriad of proposed tax increases that has been met with questions and real concerns. This

cycle of ad hoc tax hikes undermines predictability, hampers economic growth, and threatens faith in Legislative Government.

Currently, tax increases in Maine can be enacted by a simple majority vote in both chambers of the legislature. This has led to frequent, and recent, partisan battles and unpredictable tax policies, which can deter investment and economic development.

Research from the Mercatus Center indicates that states requiring supermajorities for tax increases tend to have more stable revenue streams and better fiscal health. According to this study, states like New Hampshire and Massachusetts, which have supermajority requirements or similar constraints, demonstrate more disciplined fiscal policies and greater economic resilience.

Implementing a supermajority requirement in our state constitution would serve as a safeguard against hasty or politicized tax hikes that could burden Maine families, blue collar workers, business owners, and businesses. It would ensure that any decision to increase taxes reflects a broader consensus, balancing diverse interests and fostering long-term fiscal responsibility.

Additionally, this amendment would align Maine with a growing national trend toward fiscal prudence. Currently 17 states have some form of supermajority requirement for tax increases or expenditures, recognizing the importance of fiscal discipline.

Maine faces ongoing fiscal challenges, and our tax policies should reflect a commitment to stability and economic vitality. By amending our constitution to require a supermajority for raising state taxes, we can protect Maine taxpayers, attract investment, and promote responsible governance.

Supporting this measure, sends a strong bi-partisan message to Maine Tax Payers that the people who were elected to do the work of the people are holding ourselves to the highest standards. Especially when we are spending their money. This is the Maine people's money. That's why Legislators shouldn't be able to bring more of it into state coffers without a **supermajority of the people's representatives weighing in.**

I urge my colleagues to support this vital constitutional amendment. Together, we can build a stronger, more resilient Maine for generations to come.

Thank you.