



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

2 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, MAINE 04333-0002
(207) 287-1440
TTY: (207) 287-4469

Benjamin C. Hymes

318 Birches Road
Waldo, ME 04915
Phone: (207) 808-3413
Benjamin.Hymes@legislature.maine.gov

Testimony of Rep. Benjamin Hymes

LD 1560, "An Act to Address Conflicts of Interest with Municipal Contracts" *Before the Joint Standing Committee on State and Local Government*

April 28, 2025

Good morning, Senator Baldacci, Representative Salisbury, and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on State and Local Government. I am Representative Benjamin Hymes and I proudly represent House District 38. I am here today to present **LD 1560, "An Act to Address Conflicts of Interest with Municipal Contracts"**.

The need for this bill was brought to my attention by an incident in my district. As I spoke with more people around the state it came to light that this type of scenario happens more than we realize.

The issue is accountability. We had a selectman that also had a lawn care business. He was awarded the contract to maintain the town's cemeteries. The issue arose when his lawn care business started causing damage to the headstones. Concerned citizens took their grievances to the select board with evidence of the damage. However, since the business owner was also the selectmen the ability for any kind of recourse was immediately shut down.

This bill clarifies that municipal contracts should not be awarded to a select board member for this very reason. The bill does allow flexibility if there is no other option then a separate board of three town's people be appointed to deal with any grievances that arise from this conflict.

Thank you for your time and I am here to answer any questions that you may have.

Benjamin Hymes
State Representative