

Testimony in Support of

LD 432: RESOLUTION, Proposing an Amendment to the Constitution of Maine to Allow  
Municipalities to Apportion Real and Personal Property Taxes on the Basis of Property  
Classification

April 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 also a member of MMA's Legislative Policy Committee and am  
testifying today in strong support of LD 432.

The LPC's sole focus in this legislative session has been property tax relief, both direct relief to  
taxpayers such as bills that offer more generous Homestead Exemption deductions, for example,  
and indirect relief by supporting issues that would ease pressure on mil rates, such as expanding  
the reimbursements for GA expenses.

LD 432 seeks to provide towns and cities with the ability to adjust property tax ratios based on a  
property's classification. You, the Legislature, will establish what those classifications are and  
the permitted ratio ranges associated with each classification. Participation by municipalities is  
optional.

Property tax relief has never been more necessary. As we all are well aware, the Constitution  
requires that municipalities be reimbursed no less than 50% for any, "statutory property tax  
exemptions or credits issued after April 1, 1978," (Article 4, section 23). It is for this reason that  
it's been difficult to approval for bills that increase the Homestead and Veterans Exemptions,  
despite how worthy of tax relief both groups are.

Now, here's the beauty of this Constitutional amendment. With LD 432 you are providing  
substantial relief to your constituents at no cost to the state. I realize that this sounds like I'm  
peddling snake oil but hear me out. With this amendment in place, you then pass legislation that  
allows for taxing permanent homesteads at a ratio range of 80-100%, and non-homestead  
residences at a range of 100 – 120%. The municipalities can work within the permitted ranges to  
make this revenue neutral. Because participation is optional the Constitutional mandate of a 50%  
reimbursement does not apply.

To my possibly naive thinking, this is an opportunity for both parties to come together for the  
good of all permanent residents of Maine, something I am sure everyone's constituents would  
welcome.

Thank you for considering my testimony.