



# HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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## Steven D. Foster

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Senator Grohoski, Representative Cloutier, distinguished members of the Committee on Taxation, I'm Steve Foster, Representative for House District 32, serving Charleston, Dexter, Exeter, Garland, Stetson, and a part of Bradford, here to present **LD1818**, a **"RESOLUTION, Proposing an Amendment to the Constitution of Maine to Limit Taxes, Spending or Debt Without Approval by the Voters"**, which may be one of the simpler bills this committee will hear.

This bill is being introduced at the request of a constituent at a time when many Maine taxpayers are concerned if they'll be able to stretch their paycheck to the end of the month. At the same time, the State is working to find funding to support a budget approaching \$12 billion dollars, is facing an income shortfall, and is contemplating new taxes. At \$11.6 billion dollars, the two-year budget represents State spending of \$8300 for each resident. Add to that the municipal and county spending which increases year after year and it's no wonder folks are concerned about where we're headed.

According to a recent Wallet Hub study, at the end of 2024 the state of Maine ranked 4<sup>th</sup> with the country's highest overall tax burden at 10.74% of total personal income, behind New York, Hawaii, and Vermont. Maine ranked 1<sup>st</sup> in property tax burden at 4.86% of total personal income. This aligns closely with the several other studies and lists easily accessed on line.

With that in mind, those paying the taxes in Maine are feeling more left out of the process that determines their contribution to fund their government and the seemingly increasing numbers of those dependent on their governments' budgets. Although some still have a direct say through their voice and vote at their local town meeting, most find themselves subject to spending and tax increases made by budget committees at municipal, county, and state levels, with no final say on their part.

If approved by this Legislature and the voters by referendum, this simplified Taxpayer Bill Of Rights could change that for Maine, as it has elsewhere. I submit it to you and ask that you consider how your hard working constituents, who pay our salaries out of their own, would want you to deal with it.

Thank you.  
Respectfully submitted,  
Steve Foster  
State Representative

District 32 Charleston, Dexter, Exeter, Garland, Stetson, Bradford (part)