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LD 1748

I'm here to express my disagreement with LD 1748, a proposed act to modify the school budget referendum process by restricting the occasions when referenda are held.

My contention with LD 1748 stems from my belief that it could disproportionately empower school boards, thereby complicating the voters' ability to turn down school budgets that don't align with their views.

As it stands in Maine, voters must approve school budgets every three years through a referendum. This procedure can be lengthy, but the importance of ensuring schools' accountability to voters cannot be overstated.

Contrarily, LD 1748 intends to do away with the requirement for referenda in most instances, enabling school boards to validate budgets without direct voter consent. This could hand more control over our tax dollars to the school boards and make it increasingly challenging for us to demand accountability.

Another element of LD 1748 that concerns me is its potential to hinder voters' capacity to veto unsatisfactory school budgets. A budget is currently deemed rejected if it's opposed by the majority of voters. However, LD 1748 proposes a change whereby a budget would be rejected only if most of the referendum participants voted against it. This amendment could make it tougher for a budget to be rejected, particularly if a considerable number of voters abstain from the referendum.

Given these considerations, I strongly encourage you to vote against LD 1748. Thank you for your attention.