

Brad Christo
South Berwick
LD 2173

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Town of South Berwick
LD2173

Not to be repetitive, I want to acknowledge my full support for the submittals of the Towns of Scarborough, Brunswick, Falmouth, and fellow resident Mallory Cook. They accurately portray the basic challenges ahead for LD1829 if it is not repealed or amended. Especially since LD2173 does not address timelines for municipalities to complete the work.

The work is, in the simplest terms, for our town to revisit, amend, and authorize a new version of our Comprehensive Plan just completed in 2024. Then, in addition, we must revise our zoning ordinances to ensure compliance with the goals and strategies of this newly adopted Comprehensive Plan. The process is not simple.

Nor addressed is the confusion and stress residents are acquiring as they grapple to understand the implications these laws will impose on them and their community with this compressed timeline. These stresses will further hinder the process.

Although enacted as law in June 2025, the Department of the Secretary of State did not submit to the public its "Notice of Rule Making Adoption" for LD1829 until January 11, 2026. I think it is immaterial whether this is a standard procedure to make the rules available nearly 7 months later. The gross effect is municipalities have little more than 5 months to develop compliance with this law in accordance with these rules.

Considering the controversy surrounding LD1829, the late date of adopting rules, and LD2173 inability, at present, to address timelines, then this bill needs amending to mandate extensions to the timelines stated in LD1829. I believe, at a minimum, a one-year extension is necessary to February 2027 for those towns in need of compliance by July 2026, and February 2028 for those with a July 2027 deadline.

This should also give the legislature time to revisit the content of this law as indicated by the many testimonies.

Thank you for considering my testimony.