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LD 16

I am disappointed to see this mis-guided proposal brought forward again. I am happy to be able to say that District Attorney Bob Granger is professional, capable, and effective, and I do not believe that Washington County is ill-served by his administration. I see this move to establish a separate Washington County district as founded in a desire among a short list of parties influential within the county to effectively secede Washington County from the governance of the State of Maine, by bringing control of the judiciary within reach of their influence. They could then see the laws enforced according to their preferences, and citizens of Washington County would find themselves living in a backward fiefdom governed wholly by the undue influence of a small group of well-connected individuals. Crony capitalism unchecked, in other words. We recently had a very public example of this line of thinking with the "Freedom Flagpole" development plan, slated for Columbia Falls, where the developer brought a proposal before the Legislature that his property should be annexed by the neighboring town. He stated outright that he wanted to pull the land from an unorganized town, under LUPC jurisdiction, into the neighboring organized town, under DEP jurisdiction, because the environmental regulations are more relaxed under DEP! The Legislature approved, the Governor signed on, and shortly afterward, we learned of a recently built development of several cabins on another parcel in his ownership where no notification or application to DEP had been made at all. The DEP visited the site, and found major violations of the regs. He refused to engage in site remediation measures they ordered, and they enforced fines. The "Freedom Flagpole" development effort has since imploded altogether, failing to attract needed financing, and as of last summer, he was still paying fines on the cabin development. I hope that the Legislature and Governor will take a lesson from this experience, and will not be approving such mis-guided, self-interested proposals. If there are any questions regarding these comments, please post them to my e-mail address. I check this regularly, and can respond promptly. Thank you for your consideration.