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*Testimony of Rep. Scott Landry presenting*

## **LD 621, An Act To Increase the Number of Franklin County Commissioners**

*Before the Joint Standing Committee on State and Local Government*

Senator Baldacci, Representative Matlack and esteemed colleagues of the Joint Standing Committee on State and Local Government, I am Representative Scott Landry. I represent House District 113, the towns of Farmington and New Sharon. Thank you for the opportunity to introduce **LD 621, An Act To Increase the Number of Franklin County Commissioners.**

Since the Act establishing Franklin County was passed in 1838, many things have changed. Farming and lumbering were the primary sources of income. At that time, three county commissioners were established.

Today lumbering and farming are still important industries but our forefathers would not have anticipated that tourism, including skiing, snowmobiling and ecotourism, would emerge as drivers of our economy and that the northern communities would represent almost 50% of the county's tax base. Three commissioners that are primarily representing southern portion of the county do not adequately represent the needs of the northern portion of the county.

The 129<sup>th</sup> Legislature passed LD 940 to address this issue, and it was signed into law. That bill, however, permitted but did not require the Commissioners of Franklin to submit it to the legal voters of Franklin County. They did not submit it to the voters.

LD 621 will require the Commissioners to submit this proposal to the voters at referendum held in November 2024. There will be no fiscal consequence to the county as it will occur in conjunction with a general election.

It will add two commissioners for specific regions and thus provide the Rangeley and Carrabassett communities with representation they deserve.

This bill is not a partisan issue. Having five commissioners will produce more discussion and more equitable treatment of each district.

Thank you for your consideration. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have for me.