

Amanda Coombs
Stoneham

Dear members of the State and Local government committee,

I sincerely hope you will consider this important bill presented by Senator Keim. Decisions have been made by one person regarding what is best for over a million Mainers for far too long now. This simply cannot become a habit. We have a beautiful democratic process so that our voices are heard and the various perspectives and life circumstances of our people are taken into consideration, and also so that one person doesn't have too much power and influence. This is democracy 101 - even my 8-year-old understands this vital-to-our-state concept.

Businesses are closing for good. People are losing their jobs. Suicide attempts and domestic violence have skyrocketed. Kids are enduring constant instability in their education, and their grades and mental health are suffering. Churches are closing their doors. This does not at all sound like a place where the government is of the people, by the people, and for the people.

I am fearful that if the dictatorship we have allowed for so long in Maine continues, many will leave. Although I swore I'd never consider this, in recent months I myself have wondered if picking up my family and heading to greener pastures was a good idea. There are plenty of states which are embracing the democratic process which has worked for it's people for so long, plenty of places where I could go and my voice would be heard. It breaks my heart to feel so desperate to be heard that I'd even consider leaving the state I love so much.

I know that our representatives and senators are eager to get to work and to share what their constituents have been experiencing and how to best walk through this situation with them. They are well aware that government could not possibly understand what is best for it's people unless that government heard from and actually listened to it's people. Unless it worked to understand their various perspectives and circumstances. And one person could not possibly carry that out. We need the boots-on-the-ground type of representation of our senators and representatives.

There is no valid reason why this should have gone on for so long, and it's time to get back to what is best for the people of Maine. Thank you for considering this important bill.

Sincerely,
Amanda Coombs
Stoneham