

Senator Baldacci, Representative Matlack, and distinguished members of the Committee on State and Local Government, my name is Christopher Petit, I'm a veteran of the U.S. Navy, and I live in Waterboro, Maine.

I respectfully request that you vote "Ought to Pass" on **LD 980**.

As of last year, it was decided on behalf of the citizens of Maine that COVID-19 was the most important consideration in the world—precariously more so than any other illness, cause of death, human right, civil liberty, final moment with a dying loved one, financial status, mental health, wellness, joy, childhood...

It's been demanded that we abandon our own instincts and faculties for inconsistent generalities drawn by presumed "experts" and media. "Two weeks to flatten the curve" for a virus with a statistical 99.97% survival rate has evolved into a sort of nonsensical moratorium on death itself. Indeed, the circumstances in which we now find ourselves are not of science, but of science fiction.

Our elected and appointed representatives are entrusted to safeguard the hallmarks of our republic--to uphold or enhance the freedom to live our lives as we see fit, not to erode them for political expediency. As such, our system of government does not provision a rule by fiat in any capacity—nor does it encourage a collaboration among the branches of government to expand their power over the people, to the detriment of the people. Legitimate constitutional arguments abound that the restrictions endured by the people of Maine are in gross violation of the 1st and 4th Amendments, and Article 6 Clause 2—and that a persistence thereof, under auspices of the 10th Amendment and the Maine State Constitution, are abhorrent to the precedents set by *Marbury v. Madison*, and to some extent, *Jacobson v. Massachusetts*.

Maine is hailed as one of the safest states in the union—a testament to the charity and resolve of her people. Neither emergence from a pandemic nor the betterment of society can be sought through indefinite bondage—but in recognizing the rights of businesses to exercise their own operational discretion, and the rights of the people to mitigate their own personal health considerations. The exercise of individual freedom has never been without an acceptance of risk—nor has it ever been without mutual trust.

The socio-economic conditions that have been leveled in the wake of an inarguably politicized pandemic, and the ongoing prosecution of everyday Americans for assuring their livelihoods, must be duly brought into question.

Thank you sincerely for your time, and I respectfully request that you vote "Ought to Pass."