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LD 1553

My name is Richard Shapiro, and I live in Brunswick. I am testifying in support of LD 1553, the proposed Amendment to the Constitution of the state of Maine requiring a supermajority to raise taxes.

There is no tax revenue to pay for social services without an economy. Period. This is economics 101. Those familiar with more advanced economics will know that the level of taxation that generates maximum revenue in the short term will not maximize growth, and will in fact stunt revenue generation in the future.

The citizens of the state of Maine are already subject to some of the highest taxes in the nation, while having some of the highest costs of living and energy prices.

Our GDP ranks 39th of the 50 states.

We are demographically the oldest state - and the hostile tax climate here is driving away young and productive citizens and our remaining businesses, leaving few but the retired and those who cannot afford to leave.

Unfortunately, given this situation, we have reached a state of partisanship in the legislature where a simple majority vote is being used to further niche partisan interests without input from, or consideration of, the interests of our businesses or productive citizens.

We need to force the parties to work together. Government isn't supposed to be a game of counting political coup and maintaining political power in Augusta at all costs.

This selfish, petty, gamesmanship is destroying our future, and the future we had once wished for our children.

Requiring the parties to work together on taxes is a step towards fixing this dire situation.

Thank you.