



STATE OF MAINE
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
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AUGUSTA, MAINE
04333-0001

Paul R. LePage

GOVERNOR

13 April 2018

The 128th Legislature of the State of Maine
State House
Augusta, Maine

Dear Honorable Members of the 128th Legislature:

Under the authority vested in me by Article IV, Part Third, Section 2 of the Constitution of the State of Maine, I am hereby vetoing LD 1840, "An Act To Revise the Municipal Consolidation Referendum Process."

Current law empowers residents of a municipality concerned about redundancies and inefficiencies in their local government to request, by petition, the formation of a joint charter commission to consider and make recommendations for the consolidation of two or more municipalities. Public hearings on those recommendations allow voters to inform themselves and consider whether to proceed with consolidation. If voters elect not to proceed, residents must generally wait three years to reconsider the issue.

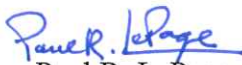
LD 1840 limits the ability of local residents to determine the course of their towns' futures by placing higher barriers in front of residents who wish to give due consideration to the potential consolidation of municipalities.

First, after submission of a petition, LD 1840 requires a preliminary vote that may scuttle the entire process before any investigation or report on the outcome of consolidation is issued. At that point the electorate has little, if any, information with which to inform itself prior to rendering a decision. A vote in the negative denies the opportunity for such information to be gathered.

Second, unless a very large number of voters agree, if the particular proposal put forth by a joint charter commission fails, LD 1840 increases from three years to six years the waiting period before voters can request formation of another joint charter commission to put forth an alternative proposal. This period of time is too long and inhibits local control.

For these reasons, I return LD 1840 unsigned and vetoed. I strongly urge the Legislature to sustain it.

Sincerely,


Paul R. LePage
Governor



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