

Consolidation Law: Wrong Solution, Wrong Time

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Maine citizens should repeal the 2007 School Consolidation law on November 3. It's cost more money than it's saved. It hasn't worked. And it's overkill.

The Consolidation Law is costing us more money at a time when we have less. The Governor promised us that consolidation would save us \$66.5 million. But the consolidation plans filed with the state by new districts listed a savings of only \$1.65 million per year. Further, the state and local communities have spent at least \$6 million to study, plan, and implement new RSUs. It will cost more in the next few years to "level" teacher salaries.

We're facing extreme financial hardships. Stop wasting our money. Repeal the law. Vote Yes on 3.

The Consolidation Law has failed to consolidate districts. Only 20 new RSUs have formed from two or more previous districts. Most of the "reorganized districts" listed by the Department of Education are simply old SADs, CSDs, or Unions with a new name. 135 Maine communities studied the pros and cons of consolidation and decided that it would not save money or improve the quality of education for their children. The law will not help these communities and schools.

Repeal the law so these towns can find real efficiencies. Vote Yes on 3.

Under the Consolidation Law, small minorities of voters made the choice to consolidate. Their vote terminated town school boards, gave up town ownership of schools and land, and agreed to new cost-sharing agreements with neighbors. Now we are learning that there is no way to vote to leave an RSU. We are captives in a new bureaucracy.

Return democracy to Maine towns. Repeal the law. Vote Yes on 3.

The Consolidation Law required every Maine community to propose and accept a reorganization plan, under penalty of losing state funds. Research shows, however, that consolidation works in some types of region and not in others. It shows that consolidation can cost more and does not necessarily lead to educational improvements. The "consolidation cure" is NOT a cure for every town and every region of our state.

Repeal the law. Vote Yes on 3. Give Mainers a chance to find solutions that work for them.