



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Senator Lachowicz, Representative Graham, honorable members of the State and Local Government Committee. I'm Representative Brian Jones, and I'm here to testify against LD 490, A Resolution Proposing an Amendment to the Constitution of Maine to Limit a Governor's Pension to Governors Who Have Served 2 Full Terms.

While the people of Maine, in light of their belief in a citizen Legislature and Executive, would properly stand behind an amendment to the state's constitution to grant no pensions for any elected officials, this bill inappropriately singles out only one elected official and makes possible withdrawal of rights to a pension retroactive.

Whether we agree or not with our current Governor, changing his benefits after one term is more than political shenanigans, it's a personal affront. This distracting legislative proposal does nothing to further the goodwill needed to productively engage in the hard work of leading Maine through these difficult times. In fact, even its consideration makes the environment required for cooperation and collegiality more toxic.

What is indeed the purpose of bringing this bill forward? Is it to save the state and its taxpayers money? I certainly hope the committee requests and considers a fiscal note. But if cost savings are the motive, I respectfully ask the committee to consider the costs of the pensions of all Legislators. If we are here to serve the people, and not for personal financial gain, perhaps a nobler proposal would be to consider legislation that would have the effect of all elected officials foregoing retirement benefits.

This bill is a distraction, mere political tomfoolery that will serve no purpose but to inflame unnecessarily the tensions between the Legislature and the Governor. This is not responsible leadership of our state.

I urge the committee to dispense expeditiously with this foolishness and focus on the real work we must do together for the good of the People.