

Rep. Heidi E. Scheuermann Testimony
H.213 County Budget Process
February 27, 2015
Government Operations Committee

As a former Select Board member, I have long been an advocate for local democracy; for ensuring the people of a community have a voice and a vote on the workings and finances of a local region.

For six years, I served on the Stowe Select Board – two years as Chair – and each time I was frustrated that we didn't really have a say in regard to a pretty large portion of the budget we were proposing to the voters of Stowe.

As such, I have thought long and hard about the County Budgeting process over the years, and believe that simple modifications can be made to the process to ensure that participating municipalities have a vote on the budgets that are proposed.

That is just what H. 213 does.

It simply changes the budget process by adding to it an approval by vote of the majority of Select Boards of the County representing the majority of county population.

To be clear, this is not a bill to limit anything with regard to our Assistant Judges. This bill does not do anything at all that prevents our Assistant Judges from doing what they have been doing.

It is simply that all other budgets I can think of that relate to our municipalities are voted on by the people – School Budget, Town Budget.

This bill will simply give our municipalities a voice and vote in the County Budget.

Given the complexities of, and strains on, our municipalities, I think it is only fair that they have this voice and vote.