

From: Robert Bates <vtbob14@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 11, 2021 8:13 PM
To: Andrea Hussey <AHussey@leg.state.vt.us>
Subject: [External] Proposed charter change for the Town of Essex

[External]

Dear House Government Operations Committee Members:

I write to encourage your support of the proposed 3+3 charter change for the Town of Essex. Your doing so will affirm the will of over 60% of Essex voters who voted to approve this governance structure in March of 2020. As you are aware, Essex is comprised of two sections, the Village of Essex Junction and the portion of Essex which is the town outside the village.(TOV). The Village and the TOV are virtually equal in population with each having 11,000+ residents.

Each section of the town has its own unique character, one more urban and the other more suburban/rural. While the Village and TOV share many common needs and goals, each also has unique requirements and aspirations.

Currently, Essex is governed by a 5 member selectboard whose members are elected at large from throughout the town. This, unfortunately, can create situations where a large majority of the board resides in either the Village or the TOV, resulting in less understanding of the needs of the other section they are obligated to represent. Over the years, this has resulted in residents of both sections of Essex feeling frustrated that their needs were not being addressed around specific issues.

The 3+3 proposal provides for equal representation on the selectboard for both the Village and the TOV; a simple but fair solution. Remember that when the votes from the Village and the TOV were combined and counted last year that over 60% of Essex voters supported 3+3. This was democracy in action! I urge your approval of this charter change request on behalf of all the residents of the Essex community.

Sincerely yours,

Robert Bates
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