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05/04/2021

Open Town Meeting should be replaced by a Town Council/Manager form of government. It is far more accessible to show up to the polls and elect a representative who represents your values. Asking a working-class family to show up to Town Meeting for three hours on a Tuesday night is inequitable. There are costs associated with the event that hit families differently. If the Town is to keep Town Meeting in place, we should also consider paying for childcare for voters who want to attend but cannot due to this issue.

Elections have low voter-turn-out because of a lack of community outreach, campaigning, and public education. If people understood why their vote was important, then they would be more likely to show up to the polls. Also election days should be held on Saturdays or make them a holiday and early voting should be publicized more broadly.

The argument that the Town is built-out and will not grow is very wrong. There are plenty of opportunities to create more density in our town centers (Ballardvale, Shawsheen, and Downtown). There are zoning changes that can be implemented to influence greater density. Town Meeting impedes these changes from taking place. If we want to become more sustainable, healthier, and inclusive, then we need compact, dense development that prioritizing people walking to their work and essential services or the train into Boston. We cannot rely on Town Meeting to make these changes.