

—Slug:.....COMM-0854.opin.letter.a00\_distler  
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—For section.....Voices/Letters from readers  
—Format.....Opinions - Letters to the Editor - Special  
—Dateline.....Brattleboro  
—Article Number:.....43184



**Notes from editor (not for publication):**

Hi, Arlene — on line 17 I removed “that year” to extend your words to cover Special Representative Town Meetings, not just Annual. I transposed a sentence near the end to strengthen your conclusion. Thanks so much. —Jeff



HEADLINE ELEMENTS:

####BEGIN HED####

1 Institutions such as RTM is what democracy is about

####END HED####

####BEGIN SUBHED####

2

####END SUBHED####

3 TEXT BODY:

####BEGIN TEXT####

4 I’m writing to urge a “yes” vote to continue  
5 Representative Town Meeting. And to encourage those who wish  
6 to discontinue it to instead run to be a representative!

7 It is a truly democratic process, one of the very few we  
8 still have. Issues are thoroughly discussed — sometimes at great  
9 length. There have been times when through those discussions, I

10 learned enough new (to me) facts or a different perspective to  
11 convince me to change my vote.

12           However, I can understand the frustration of those who  
13 may feel their voices are not being heard. I would like to suggest  
14 a new protocol for RTM: that at least one representative from  
15 each district be chosen by their fellow representatives to hold at  
16 least one gathering before Town Meeting, to garner sentiment on  
17 articles to be voted on.

18           The result of those meetings, notes, and maybe straw  
19 votes would be distributed to all the town reps to consider when  
20 voting. There would be no guarantee that a rep would vote a  
21 particular way, as you may wish, but reps would have a better  
22 sense of the sentiment of their constituents.

23           A completely open Town Meeting would, I believe, be  
24 too chaotic to allow for informed debate.

25           It is so rare, these days, to have open, respectable  
26 debates — we should value those that still exist. Institutions such  
27 as RTM is what democracy is about. Let's not consign it to the  
28 past.

####END TEXT####

BIO/COATTAIL:

####BEGIN BIO/COATTAIL####

29

####END BIO/COATTAIL####

LAST ISSUE IN WHICH THIS FILE CAN BE RUN:

####BEGIN MAXISSUE####

30

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####END MAXISSUE####

LINKS:

####BEGIN LINKS####

31

###END LINKS###

VIDEO:

###BEGIN VIDEO###

32

###END VIDEO###

LOGLINE (SOCIAL MEDIA):

###BEGIN LOGLINE###

33

###END LOGLINE###