

—Slug:.....COMM-0854.opin.letter.a00\_lewis  
—Contributor.....Maggie Lewis  
—Contributor email.....maggie@comcast.net  
—For section.....Voices/Letters from readers  
—Format.....Opinions - Letters to the Editor - Special  
—Dateline.....Brattleboro  
—Article Number:.....43190



**Notes from editor (not for publication):**



HEADLINE ELEMENTS:

####BEGIN HED####

1 Australian ballot: the most inclusive option

####END HED####

####BEGIN SUBHED####

2

####END SUBHED####

3 TEXT BODY:

####BEGIN TEXT####

4 I have lived in small towns with open Town Meeting and  
5 in towns with Representative Town Meeting. In these two  
6 scenarios, due to life circumstance, my vote has not counted, and  
7 I have not been represented.

8 I am a well-informed voter who deserves the opportunity  
9 to vote through direct democracy: one person, one vote.

10 Open Town Meeting is exclusionary, with not all voters  
11 being able to attend due to restrictions or circumstance. Should

12 this become the option, Brattleboro must be prepared to  
13 accommodate voters in one location. This will be a logistical  
14 nightmare.

15 The Brattleboro Representative Town Meeting puts the  
16 decision-making power in the hands of a dedicated group of  
17 citizens, dominated by a small non-representative group, often  
18 who have come to their respective positions as representatives  
19 with no contest. Additionally, positions for representatives often  
20 remain unfilled. This is not due to lack of interest but to  
21 circumstance; e.g., child care, disabilities, and/or work schedule,  
22 to name a few.

23 Australian ballot gives equal voice to all eligible citizens  
24 and offers the potential for higher voter participation. This  
25 method is the most inclusive option with the opportunity to vote  
26 early or via absentee ballot if restrictions/circumstance prevent  
27 voting during the election.

28 Additionally, an anonymous ballot removes the pressure  
29 of a vote in a public space.

30 Citizens of Brattleboro will continue to have many  
31 opportunities for deliberative debate and discussion throughout  
32 the year through our committee and Selectboard forums, offering  
33 either in-person or remote participation.

34 Australian ballot gives equal voice to all eligible citizens.

####END TEXT####

BIO/COATTAIL:

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

35

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

LAST ISSUE IN WHICH THIS FILE CAN BE RUN:

####BEGIN MAXISSUE####

36

0

####END MAXISSUE####

LINKS:

37

####BEGIN LINKS####

####END LINKS####

VIDEO:

38

####BEGIN VIDEO####

####END VIDEO####

LOGLINE (SOCIAL MEDIA):

39

####BEGIN LOGLINE####

####END LOGLINE####