



CourseStorm, Inc
148 Main Street
Orono, ME 04473

Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs
The Honorable James Hamper, Chair
The Honorable Drew Gattine, Chair
C/O Marianne Macmaster

March 1, 2017

Dear Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs,

I am writing to submit testimony regarding the appropriation for the Advanced Technology Development Centers budget as part of LD 390, HP0281 An Act Making Unified Appropriations and Allocations for the Expenditures of State Government, General Fund and Other Funds.

As a founder and owner of two successful business in Orono, I was dismayed to learn that the proposed budget eliminates state funding for this critical program, and I strongly urge you to reinstate the funding for the Advanced Technology Development Centers in the budget.

My software development business, RainStorm Consulting currently employs seven people in the fields of software programming, technical support, hosting and server maintenance. Several years ago, with the help and assistance of the education and connections available through the Target Technology Center, I started a new company focused on delivering software to educational institutions across the US. We now have customers in thirty seven states and employ six people in computer programming, digital marketing and technical support.

I have hired three new staff in the last two months and expect to hire six more in advanced technology positions over the next year. These are good paying jobs, with full benefits, and I am confident they would not have been possible without the support we received through the Target Technology Center.

My co-founder and I have both been through the TopGun program offered at the Target Technology Center and continue to benefit from the business resources and education offered through the Center. Further, the connection of the program to the wealth of resources at the University of Maine has assisted my company in finding the students, faculty and technology resources we need to continue to grow and benefit.

Through the education, events, mentoring and connections, the center helped us to turn a back-of-the-napkin idea into a growth business. Further it has created an ecosystem and community in Eastern and Northern Maine where startups can thrive. New business startups are absolutely critical for the renewal and continual economic development of the region and the Center is playing a key role in this area.

Please reinstate funding for this critical resource to ensure that our region can continue to benefit and grow new businesses long into the future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brian M. Rahill". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "B" and "R".

Brian M. Rahill
Founder RainStorm Consulting
CEO and Co-founder CourseStorm