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**STATE OF MAINE
ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE
COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS**

To: Senator Peggy Rotundo, Senate Chair
Representative Drew Gattine, House Chair
Members, Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs

From: Senator Joseph Rafferty, Senate Chair *JR (SR)*
Representative Kelly Murphy, House Chair *KM (SR)*
Members, Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs

Date: January 24, 2025

Re: LD 209, An Act to Make Supplemental Appropriations and Allocations from the General Fund and Other Funds for the Expenditures of State Government and to Change Certain Provisions of the Law Necessary to the Proper Operations of State Government for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2025

Pursuant to Joint Rule 314, on Wednesday, January 22, the Joint Standing Committee on Education & Cultural Affairs attended the joint public hearing on matters under their jurisdiction in LD 209, *An Act to Make Supplemental Appropriations and Allocations from the General Fund and Other Funds for the Expenditures of State Government and to Change Certain Provisions of the Law Necessary to the Proper Operations of State Government for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2025*. Immediately following the public hearing, the committee convened a work session to vote on each initiative.

The attached report-back template reflects the votes of the members present in the room and those that recorded their votes with the committee analyst the following day.¹ Each vote is recorded as the number of committee members in favor of moving the initiative “IN” to the supplemental budget or “OUT” of the supplemental budget. The committee did not vote to amend or recommend any new initiatives; however, each caucus wishes to express additional sentiments as follows:

¹ Present and voting at the budget work session were Senators Rafferty, Libby, and Pierce; and Representatives Murphy, Bagshaw, Dodge, Haggan, Lyman, Mitchell (part), and Sargent.

Representatives Brennan and Mitchell recorded absentee votes after the work session.

Members of the Democratic caucus wish to emphasize, in regard to initiative #79 related to Education in the Unorganized Territory (EUT), that the purpose of this line item is to bring the EUT into compliance with both federal and state law.

Members of the Republican caucus note that, due to the truncated timeframe set for committee reports to AFA, they did not receive data they requested related to the retroactivity of a position reclassification, nor did they receive data about per-student scholarship amounts for the Free Community College program.

In regard to allocations for paid family medical leave premiums (inits. 258, 231, and language Part E), members of the Republican caucus are concerned with the impact on taxpayers to cover the 1% costs, as well as with setting a precedent of yearly 1% funding for employee premiums in future budget bills.

Members of the Republican caucus are generally opposed to the Free Community College program due to its costliness but also express concern with the broad eligibility for high school graduates from any location to be able to access free college in Maine.

Finally, members of the Republican caucus feel that promotions or any other reorganizations that lead to position reclassifications should not be granted by the Bureau of Human Resources without authorized funds allocated for that position. The members are unwilling to support increases in funding for positions until savings are booked for the 1,500 unfilled positions in state government.

Thank you for your consideration of the recommendations offered by the Joint Standing Committee on Education & Cultural Affairs. Should you have any questions regarding the report-back, please do not hesitate to reach out to the committee chairs.

Sec. A-5. Appropriations and allocations. The following appropriations and allocations are made.

COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM, BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE MAINE

Maine Community College System - Board of Trustees 0556

Initiative: Provides funding to continued operations at Maine's seven community colleges to support Maine's Paid Family and Medical Leave net employee premiums.

Ref. #: 258	One Time	Committee Vote	<u>7 IN</u>	AFA Vote	<u> </u>	
			4 OUT			
GENERAL FUND				2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
All Other				\$209,609	\$0	\$0
GENERAL FUND TOTAL				<u>\$209,609</u>	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$0</u>

Justification:

This initiative provides funding for the 1.0% payroll premium assessed to fund the Maine Paid Family and Medical Leave benefit, pursuant to 26 MRSA chapter 7, sub-chapter 6-C.

Maine Community College System - Board of Trustees 0556

Initiative: Adjusts funding to align with revenue projections from the December 1, 2024 revenue forecast.

Ref. #: 259	One Time	Committee Vote	<u>7 IN</u>	AFA Vote	<u> </u>	
			4 OUT			
OTHER SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS				2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
All Other				(\$219,077)	\$0	\$0
OTHER SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS TOTAL				<u>(\$219,077)</u>	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$0</u>

Notes:

Informational only. Not part of the Public Hearing. Policy Committees need not make a recommendation on initiatives that align Other Special Revenue allocations with the Revenue Forecast.

Justification:

This initiative aligns allocation with December 1, 2024 revenue forecast.

MCCS Free Community College - Two Enrollment Years Z335

Initiative: Provides funding for Maine's seven community colleges to continue offering student scholarships through the Maine free community college tuition program. Funding is necessary to maintain the existing program that covers 2024 and 2025 eligible high school graduates and those completing their general educational development (GED) exam or high school equivalency test (HiSET) as established in Public Law 2023, Chapter 412.

Ref. #: 261	One Time	Committee Vote	<u>7 IN</u>	AFA Vote	<u> </u>
			4 OUT		

OTHER SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
All Other	\$7,300,000	\$0	\$0
OTHER SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS TOTAL	\$7,300,000	\$0	\$0

Notes:

See Part Q

Justification:

This initiative provides funding to continue the Maine free community college tuition program for eligible high school graduates and those completing their general educational development (GED) exam or high school equivalency test (HiSET) enrolled at the seven community colleges.

COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM, BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE MAINE

DEPARTMENT TOTALS	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
GENERAL FUND	\$209,609	\$0	\$0
OTHER SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS	\$7,080,923	\$0	\$0
DEPARTMENT TOTAL- ALL FUNDS	\$7,290,532	\$0	\$0

Sec. A-9. Appropriations and allocations. The following appropriations and allocations are made.

EDUCATION, DEPARTMENT OF

Education in Unorganized Territory 0220

Initiative: Provides funding to increase one seasonal Education Specialist III position from 48 weeks to 52 weeks annually.

Ref. #: 79	One Time	Committee Vote	<u>7 IN</u>	AFA Vote	_____	
			<u>4 OUT</u>			
GENERAL FUND				2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
POSITIONS - LEGISLATIVE COUNT				1.000	0.000	0.000
POSITIONS - FTE COUNT				(0.923)	0.000	0.000
Personal Services				\$21,966	\$0	\$0
GENERAL FUND TOTAL				<u>\$21,966</u>	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$0</u>

Justification:

This initiative provides funding to increase one Education Specialist III position from 48 weeks to 52 weeks. This position provides administrative support and direction for all students receiving special education services in Education in the Unorganized Territory. This position ensures state and federal compliance related to Special Education for all students receiving education in the Unorganized Territory.

General Purpose Aid for Local Schools 0308

Initiative: Provides funding for the approved range change of one Deputy Commissioner of Education position from range 38 to range 39 and transfers All Other to Personal Services to fund the range change.

Ref. #: 81	One Time	Committee Vote	<u>9 IN</u>	AFA Vote	_____	
			<u>2 OUT</u>			
GENERAL FUND				2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
Personal Services				\$578	\$0	\$0
All Other				(\$578)	\$0	\$0
GENERAL FUND TOTAL				<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$0</u>

Notes:

Informational only. Not part of the Public Hearing. Policy Committees need not make a recommendation on Reclassification, Reorganization and Range Change initiatives.

Justification:

Provides funding for the approved range change of one Deputy Commissioner of Education position from range 38 to range 39 and transfers All Other to Personal Services to fund the range change.

General Purpose Aid for Local Schools 0308

Initiative: Adjusts funding to align with revenue projections from the December 1, 2024 revenue forecast.

Ref. #: 82	One Time	Committee Vote	<u>7 IN</u>	AFA Vote	_____
			<u>4 OUT</u>		

OTHER SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
All Other	(\$1,588,909)	\$0	\$0
OTHER SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS TOTAL	(\$1,588,909)	\$0	\$0

Notes:

Informational only. Not part of the Public Hearing. Policy Committees need not make a recommendation on initiatives that align Other Special Revenue allocations with the Revenue Forecast.

Justification:

This initiative aligns allocation with December 1, 2024 revenue forecast.

Leadership Team Z077

Initiative: Provides funding for the approved reorganization of one Public Service Coordinator I position from range 25 to range 27.

Ref. #: 84 One Time Committee Vote FIN AFA Vote _____

4out

GENERAL FUND	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
Personal Services	\$5,463	\$0	\$0
GENERAL FUND TOTAL	\$5,463	\$0	\$0

Notes:

Informational only. Not part of the Public Hearing. Policy Committees need not make a recommendation on Reclassification, Reorganization and Range Change initiatives.

Justification:

This position will serve as the Operations Project Coordinator to lead the coordination of operations, technology, communications, work processes and general project management for the Office of Operations within the Leadership Team. This position will develop and implement strategies to increase the success of priority projects and processes, including development and utilization of technology resources. This position will also serve as a liaison and provide technical support coordination and project facilitation to the Department.

Leadership Team Z077

Initiative: Provides funding for the approved range change of one Deputy Commissioner of Education position from range 38 to range 39 and transfers All Other to Personal Services to fund the range change.

Ref. #: 86 One Time Committee Vote FIN AFA Vote _____

3out

GENERAL FUND	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
Personal Services	\$578	\$0	\$0
All Other	(\$578)	\$0	\$0
GENERAL FUND TOTAL	\$0	\$0	\$0

Notes:

Informational only. Not part of the Public Hearing. Policy Committees need not make a recommendation on Reclassification, Reorganization and Range Change initiatives.

Justification:

Provides funding for the approved range change of one Deputy Commissioner of Education position from range 38 to range 39 and transfers All Other to Personal Services to fund the range change.

Maine Climate Corps Prog - ME Commission for Comm Svc Z350

Initiative: Provides funding to support the work of the Maine Climate Corps program.

Ref. #: 95	One Time	Committee Vote	<u>7 IN</u>	AFA Vote	<u> </u>	
			<u>4 OUT</u>			
OTHER SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS				2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
All Other				\$24,509	\$0	\$0
OTHER SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS TOTAL				\$24,509	\$0	\$0

Justification:

Public Law 2021, chapter 728 allocated one-time funds to support 4 eligible participants of the Maine Climate Corps Program using funds transferred from the Office of the Attorney General from settlement funds received for antitrust enforcement and the enforcement of the Maine Unfair Trade Practices Act. This initiative provides an allocation in fiscal year 2024-25 to allow continued support of the program through existing funds.

Maine School Safety Center Z293

Initiative: Provides funding for the approved reclassification of one State Education Representative position to a Public Service Coordinator II position, retroactive to February 20, 2024.

Ref. #: 93	One Time	Committee Vote	<u>7 IN</u>	AFA Vote	<u> </u>	
			<u>4 OUT</u>			
GENERAL FUND				2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
Personal Services				\$11,085	\$0	\$0
GENERAL FUND TOTAL				\$11,085	\$0	\$0

Notes:

Informational only. Not part of the Public Hearing. Policy Committees need not make a recommendation on Reclassification, Reorganization and Range Change initiatives.

Justification:

This position coordinates the training and implementation of school-based restorative practices. The position designs, develops and delivers curriculum and training methods, recruits and manages ten contracted staff positions necessary for implementation of training programs and conducts statewide school training needs assessments and evaluation. This position collaborates with other state organizations and community partners including work with the Children's Cabinet on issues pertaining to marginalized and system involved youth in Maine.

School and Student Supports Z270

Initiative: Provides funding for the approved reclassification of one Education Specialist III position to a State Education Representative position, retroactive to March 13, 2023 and provides funding for related All Other costs.

Ref. #: 90	One Time	Committee Vote	<u>7 IN</u>	AFA Vote	<u> </u>	
			4 OUT			
GENERAL FUND				2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
Personal Services				\$10,440	\$0	\$0
GENERAL FUND TOTAL				<u>\$10,440</u>	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$0</u>

Ref. #: 91	One Time	Committee Vote	<u>7 IN</u>	AFA Vote	<u> </u>	
			4 OUT			
OTHER SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS				2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
Personal Services				\$4,475	\$0	\$0
All Other				\$91	\$0	\$0
OTHER SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS TOTAL				<u>\$4,566</u>	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$0</u>

Notes:

Informational only. Not part of the Public Hearing. Policy Committees need not make a recommendation on Reclassification, Reorganization and Range Change initiatives.

Justification:

This position has the primary purpose to approve State public and private schools; to plan, develop, organize and administer the systems, and to provide internal and external stakeholder guidance, related to public and private and school approval and student alternative compulsory attendance and enrollment options; and, to broker relationships and provide individual technical assistance related to enrollment. The position serves as the subject matter and policy expert on school enrollment requirements for schools, DOE and other agencies, and families/communities throughout the State. The position performs high level legal analysis regarding student enrollment, eligibility and school approval, and serves as primary client subject matter decision maker for school approval and home instruction data information system design. Provides policy recommendations, and authors legislation and rules.

School Finance and Operations Z078

Initiative: Provides funding for the approved reclassification of one Office Specialist I position to a Secretary Specialist position, retroactive to June 15, 2023.

Ref. #: 88	One Time	Committee Vote	<u>7 IN</u>	AFA Vote	<u> </u>	
			4 OUT			
GENERAL FUND				2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
Personal Services				\$8,357	\$0	\$0
GENERAL FUND TOTAL				<u>\$8,357</u>	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$0</u>

Notes:

Informational only. Not part of the Public Hearing. Policy Committees need not make a recommendation on Reclassification, Reorganization and Range Change initiatives.

Justification:

This position provides technical and administrative assistance to Child Nutrition state agency staff as well as Federal United States Department of Agriculture Child Nutrition Programs in Maine. The programs include the National School Lunch Program, Child and Adult Care Food Program and the Summer Food Service Program. This position provides support with travel, website, Child Nutrition software program (CNPWeb), video recording/editing, internal and external communications, meetings and trainings.

EDUCATION, DEPARTMENT OF

DEPARTMENT TOTALS	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
GENERAL FUND	\$57,311	\$0	\$0
OTHER SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS	(\$1,559,834)	\$0	\$0
DEPARTMENT TOTAL- ALL FUNDS	(\$1,502,523)	\$0	\$0

Sec. A-18. Appropriations and allocations. The following appropriations and allocations are made.

MARITIME ACADEMY, MAINE

Maine Maritime Academy Scholarship Fund - Casino Z167

Initiative: Adjusts funding to align with revenue projections from the December 1, 2024 revenue forecast.

Ref. #: 233	One Time	Committee Vote	<u>8 IN</u>	AFA Vote	<u> </u>	
			<u>3 OUT</u>			
OTHER SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS				2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
All Other				(\$13,282)	\$0	\$0
OTHER SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS TOTAL				<u>(\$13,282)</u>	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$0</u>

Notes:

Informational only. Not part of the Public Hearing. Policy Committees need not make a recommendation on initiatives that align Other Special Revenue allocations with the Revenue Forecast.

Justification:

This initiative aligns allocation with December 1, 2024 revenue forecast.

Maritime Academy - Operations 0035

Initiative: Provides funding for Maine Maritime Academy to support Maine's Paid Family and Medical Leave premiums.

Ref. #: 231	One Time	Committee Vote	<u>7 IN</u>	AFA Vote	<u> </u>	
			<u>4 OUT</u>			
GENERAL FUND				2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
All Other				\$65,000	\$0	\$0
GENERAL FUND TOTAL				<u>\$65,000</u>	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$0</u>

Justification:

Provides funding to adjust the baseline budget to help offset the cost of the adoption of the Paid Family and Medical Leave Program that will be implemented by the Maine Department of Labor, pursuant to 26 MRSA chapter 7, sub-chapter 6-C. This funding will meet the new requirements while not passing this cost on to students.

MARITIME ACADEMY, MAINE

DEPARTMENT TOTALS	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
GENERAL FUND	\$65,000	\$0	\$0
OTHER SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS	(\$13,282)	\$0	\$0
DEPARTMENT TOTAL- ALL FUNDS	<u>\$51,718</u>	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$0</u>

PART E VOTE

7 IN

4 OUT

PART E

Sec. E-1. Transfer from Department of Administrative and Financial Services, Statewide-Family and Medical Leave; University. Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, on or before June 30, 2025, the State Controller shall transfer the unobligated balance from the Statewide-Family and Medical Leave, General Fund and Highway Fund accounts within the Department of Administrative and Financial Services to the University of Maine System, General Fund account for the purpose of supporting Maine’s Paid Family and Medical Leave premiums for eligible University of Maine System employees. These funds may be transferred by financial order upon the recommendation of the State Budget Officer and the approval of the Governor.

**PART E
SUMMARY**

This Part authorizes the transfer of the unobligated balance in the Statewide-Family and Medical Leave, General Fund and Highway Fund accounts within the Department of Administrative and Financial Services to the University of Maine System, General Fund account for the purpose of supporting Maine’s Paid Family and Medical Leave premiums for eligible University of Maine System employees.

PART Q VOTE

7 IN 4 OUT

PART Q

Sec. Q-1. Transfer from General Fund; Maine Community College System Free Community College - 2 Enrollment Years program; fiscal year 2024-25. Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, on or before June 30, 2025 the State Controller shall transfer \$7,300,000 from the unappropriated surplus of the General Fund to the Maine Community College System Free Community College – 2 Enrollment Years program, Other Special Revenue Funds account within the Maine Community College System to continue support of the 2 years of free community college for all eligible students who meet the conditions in Public Law 2023, chapter 412, Part QQQ, section 3, subsection 2.

**PART Q
SUMMARY**

This Part provides one-time funding to support the Maine Community College System Free Community College – 2 Enrollment Years program.