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Date: (Filing No. H-)

INNOVATION, DEVELOPMENT, ECONOMIC ADVANCEMENT AND BUSINESS

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**STATE OF MAINE
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
131ST LEGISLATURE
FIRST SPECIAL SESSION**

COMMITTEE AMENDMENT “ ” to H.P. 1107, L.D. 1718, “An Act to Encourage Participation in Maine's Essential Support Workforce Through Access to Higher Education”

Amend the bill by striking out all of the emergency preamble.

Amend the bill in section 1 in sub-c. 15 in §1100-HH by striking out all of subsection 1 (page 1, lines 30 to 35 in L.D.) and inserting the following:

'1. Eligible person. "Eligible person" means one of the following persons designated by an eligible worker to receive an education voucher under this subchapter:

- A. The eligible worker;
- B. The eligible worker's spouse or domestic partner;
- C. The eligible worker's biological or adopted child; or
- D. The eligible worker's grandchild.'

Amend the bill in section 1 in sub-c. 15 in §1100-HH in subsection 6 in the first line (page 2, line 13 in L.D.) by striking out the following: "who" and inserting the following: 'that'

Amend the bill in section 1 in sub-c. 15 by striking out all of §1100-II (page 2, lines 21 to 39 and page 3, lines 1 to 11 in L.D.) and inserting the following:

'§1100-II. Essential Support Worker Tuition Grant Program

1. Essential Support Worker Tuition Grant Program established. The Essential Support Worker Tuition Grant Program is established. The authority shall administer the program. Under the program, an employer of an eligible worker may apply to be a participating employer. An employee of a participating employer who is an eligible worker may participate in the program by designating an eligible person to receive an education voucher under the program. The authority shall provide an eligible person with an education voucher in an amount up to the total of one year's tuition and expenses related to

COMMITTEE AMENDMENT

1 attendance at an eligible postsecondary educational institution for each year that the eligible
2 worker works as an essential support worker and participates in the program. An eligible
3 worker may participate in the program for no more than 4 years. An education voucher
4 provided to an eligible person may be used to pay tuition and expenses related to attendance
5 at an eligible postsecondary educational institution. The authority shall provide an
6 education voucher to the eligible person at the end of each year that the eligible worker
7 who designated the eligible person participates in the program as long as the eligible worker
8 meets the program criteria established in subsection 2. The eligible worker may designate
9 a different eligible person for each year the eligible worker participates in the program.

10 **2. Program criteria.** The program criteria are as follows:

11 A. An employer of an eligible worker must apply to the authority for approval to
12 become a participating employer;

13 B. At the end of each year, a participating employer must certify whether the eligible
14 worker worked as an essential support worker for the employer at least 30 hours per
15 week for one year;

16 C. Prior to using an education voucher provided under the program, an eligible person
17 must complete an application for federal student financial aid programs for which the
18 person may be eligible for the academic year for which the person applies. The person
19 must accept all available federal and state grants and scholarships, including a Federal
20 Pell Grant or any other merit-based or needs-based grant or scholarship and other
21 sources of funding;

22 D. The value of an education voucher is limited to the amount of the cost of tuition
23 and expenses related to attendance at an eligible postsecondary educational institution,
24 less any financial aid received under paragraph C that the eligible person is not required
25 to repay;

26 E. The total value of an education voucher is capped at \$4,000;

27 F. An education voucher is good for up to 5 years after it is awarded;

28 G. An eligible worker may earn up to 4 education vouchers total and the vouchers do
29 not have to be earned in successive years;

30 H. Education vouchers may be combined for use in one year to cover a higher cost of
31 tuition and expenses related to attendance at an eligible postsecondary educational
32 institution; and

33 I. A participating employer or eligible person that does not comply with the terms of
34 the program may be required to repay the amount of any education voucher granted or
35 may be prohibited from future participation in the program.'

36 Amend the bill by striking out all of the emergency clause.

37 Amend the bill by relettering or renumbering any nonconsecutive Part letter or section
38 number to read consecutively.

39 **SUMMARY**

40 This amendment allows an education voucher provided under the Essential Support
41 Worker Tuition Grant Program to be used for both the costs of tuition and for expenses

1 related to attendance at an eligible postsecondary educational institution. The amendment
2 also makes technical edits to clarify the administration of the program. It removes the
3 emergency preamble and the emergency clause.

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FISCAL NOTE REQUIRED
(See attached)