

Good afternoon President Jackson, Speaker Talbot-Ross, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs. My name is David Bibber, and I live in Charlotte, Maine. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to testify before you. I would like to make it clear I fully support assisting those who are in need during difficult times, but I do not support the way LD 3 is currently being proposed. I have been blessed with a good career and a decent retirement so I can survive during these rather difficult times of high fuel and food prices and support assisting those less fortunate. However, these difficult times not only affects them, but affects me as well as others. Therefore, for several reasons, I question LD 3 as to whether it is fair and well thought out.

First, I do not feel it is good business practice for the State to spend money on projects with revenue projections particularly during these difficult financial times. I hate to use the old adage, "If a frog had wings, it wouldn't bump its rear end every time it jumps." However, what if the projections fail to materialize? What if there is no surplus? Will the State increase taxes? Federal income taxes; state income and sales taxes; county taxes and local property taxes have just about taxed everyone out.

Second, there are many landlords who rent residences/apartments and provide heating expenses in the rent. If this is the case, why should the tenant who does not pay for heat receive this windfall? Wouldn't it be a better idea for the landlord to receive this money which they would then apply towards heating expenses? The State could provide a voucher to the individual who in turn would give it to their energy provider or in the case of heat being provided by the landlord turn the voucher over to the landlord.

Third, the salary limitations are unfair to large families. If a family with 1 child and 1 parent working earns \$149,999, they qualify for this stipend. If a family with 4, 5, 6 or whatever number of children with both parents working earns \$200,001 they do not qualify. Is this fair?

Fourth, should the person/family who pays little to no taxes receive this stipend while the person or family who works 2 or 3 jobs and/or earned or built a decent retirement income be denied some support after all the taxes they have contributed to the system? I have no problem with assisting those with a need but at a minimum shouldn't those who have paid significantly more be eligible for at least the same amount as the less fortunate?

Finally, what about the case of an individual managing to acquire a small investment over the years which they now use to help family members by giving each of them \$15,000 a year for expenses. This may put the individual in a higher tax bracket and prevent them from being eligible for LD 3 benefits. Is this fair to someone not receiving any benefits in return for paying more in taxes?

Thank you for giving me this opportunity to voice my concerns. I wish you the best with your discussions regarding LD 3 and hope you have a very Merry and Blessed Christmas.