

State of Maine
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Testimony of Fern Desjardins, Chair of the State Board of Education

In Support of: L.D. 206: 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, 2023

Before the Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs

Sponsored by: Representative Melanie Sachsy

Date: February 25, 2023

Senator Rotundo, Representative Sachy, and Honorable Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs:

My name is Fern Desjardins. I am the Chair of the Maine State Board of Education. I am here today on behalf of the State Board to speak in support of L.D. 206: 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, 2023.

The state board consists of 11 members, which includes 2 non-voting student members. All members are appointed by the Governor. The board has the primary responsibility for formulating policy, advising the commissioner, and enforcing regulatory requirements. There is only one staff member, a secretary specialist. The board has established a number of committees to carry out its responsibilities.

I bring to your attention that there is one initiative for the State Board of Education (0614) on page A-19. This provides an additional \$6,000 in funding for per diem payments to board members. Per diem payments to board members are authorized by Maine Revised Statutes, Title 20-A, section 401, subsection 3. This initiative increases funding for per diem payments based on a projected increase in committee work by board members as it relates to the State Board of Education's approved 5-Year Strategic Plan. This initiative also provides one-time funding for \$6,000 for per diem costs incurred but not paid in fiscal year 2021-22.

The State Board of Education is in support of L.D. 206: 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, 2023.

I would be happy to answer any questions the Committee may have or to provide additional information regarding the proposed budget initiative on this bill.

