

Testimony of Jeff McCabe  
Maine Service Employees Association, SEIU Local 1989

In Support of LD 258, "An Act Making Unified Appropriations and Allocations from the General Fund and Other Funds for the Expenditures of State Government and Changing Certain Provisions of the Law Necessary to the Proper Operations of State Government for the Fiscal Years Ending June 30, 2023, June 30, 2024 and June 30, 2025" (Emergency)  
(Governor's Bill)  
Sponsored by Representative Melanie Sachs

Before the Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs,  
and the Joint Standing Committee on Taxation  
Wednesday, February 8, 2023, State House Room 228, and Electronically

Senator Rotundo, Representative Sachs, members of the Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs, and Senator Grohoski, Representative Perry, members of the Committee on Taxation, I'm Jeff McCabe, director of politics and legislation for the Maine Service Employees Association, Local 1989 of the Service Employees International Union. Maine Service Employees Association represents over 13,000 workers across the state, including workers in all three branches of Maine State Government.

The members of MSEA-SEIU Local 1989 look forward to working with this committee and the 131<sup>st</sup> Legislature in advancing what we see as shared goals in the administration's proposed State Budget.

We pay taxes for critical services that benefit all of us. Our public schools and colleges, roads and bridges, public safety, parks, clean water and the safety net protecting our children and seniors are just a few of the services we all count on. The revenues we raise through taxes ideally would provide the conditions for Maine communities to be places where we can all live, work, raise our families and, someday, retire with dignity in our own homes. This would be accomplished by ensuring that those who have benefited the most in this economy make tax contributions toward public investments that pay it forward for future generations on Maine workers, families and retirees.

Maine's current tax structure is imbalanced as a direct result of the 2011 tax cuts that mostly benefited the wealthy. We are concerned that proposals to further cut taxes would compromise Maine's capacity to uphold its commitments to Maine people and our communities now and in the future. Cutting taxes now would create shortfalls in more challenging economic times – which is exactly when resources are needed the most to sustain vital programs for Maine people and communities and to ensure continued investment in our schools and communities. It's also important to note those calling for tax cuts now never want to raise them in times of shortfalls to meet the needs of Maine people.

Instead of cutting taxes, we respectfully ask you to keep Maine's financial house in order both in good times and bad, rather than put a match to it now.

Our members are still struggling to dig out of the hole after the tax cuts in 2011 and the near destruction of State services. In fact, with the rising cost of living, our members are falling further and further behind.

Instead of cutting taxes, please ensure that profitable corporations and the wealthy pay their share. Please ensure that expensive tax programs like the property tax freeze and others are reigned in and

helping those who need it most. We also believe more disclosure is long overdue; disclosure would help complete the picture.

Again, we look forward to continuing to work with this committee, the 131st Maine Legislature and the administration on solutions to address these critical issues and any others central to the lives of Maine's public service workers, active and retired, and to the people of Maine who count on quality public services.

Thank you and I would be glad to answer any questions.