

Senator Rotundo, Representative Sachs, members of the Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs, and Senator Rafferty, Representative Brennan, members of the Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs,

I am writing to you today on behalf of myself as a private citizen in Augusta. I appreciate your committees for taking the time to consider this testimony. I work as a Title 1 Coordinator for the Maine Department of Education. As you know, it is of critical importance that the Maine DOE has the staff and resources necessary to support the varied districts and learners in our state.

It is clear to see that our decentralized school system in the US relies heavily on the capacity and initiatives that come from the state level. With departments that provide professional development, grant funding, attention and resources to underserved students, partnerships with communities, and guidance on law and instructional best practices, the Maine DOE deserves to be funded in a way that enables a strong statewide education system.

Please consider the immense impact a strong, resourced, and staffed Maine DOE would have on the districts, schools, educators, families, and students in this state. I urge legislators to continue to invest in our learning systems that begin and end with the health and wellbeing of the Maine Department of Education.

Thank you for taking the time to read my testimony.

Rita Pello
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