

**TESTIMONY
OF
LANA EWING, INTERIM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
MAINE CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION**

For the Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs
And the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs

Hearing Date: February 13, 2023

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"

Senator Rotundo, Representative Sachs, Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs and Senator Rafferty, Representative Brennan, and the Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs, my name is Lana Ewing, and I am the Interim Executive Director of the Maine Charter School Commission (the Commission). I am pleased to present testimony on behalf of the Commission's Biennial Budget request. I regret that due to pressing health considerations of Chair Wilson Hess and my family, neither of us are able to join today's proceedings.

The Commission was established by Public Law 2011, Chapter 414. It is comprised of seven members – four appointed by the Governor and three appointed by the state board from its membership. The Commission is empowered under this chapter to authorize charter schools, enter into contracts with public charter schools, oversee and monitor charter schools, and decide whether to renew, not renew or revoke their charter contracts.

The Maine Charter School Commission authorizes and monitors ten public charter schools across the state. In doing so, the Commission seeks to increase student achievement by supporting high-performing schools, promoting innovative educational opportunities in diverse public-school settings, creating new professional opportunities for educators, and novel approaches for community engagement in the design, execution, and delivery of education to the state's children.

State law allows the Charter School Commission to draw up to 3% of the annual per-pupil allocation received by each public charter school under its authorization. In fiscal year 2021 and 2022, the Commission's allocation was 2.35%.

The revenue projections for this Biennium Budget are based on a continued 2.35% allocation. The baseline budget for the Commission can be found on page A-133 in the Recommended General Fund Biennial Budget document – Part A. The Other Special Revenue Funds request is \$694,809 in each year of the biennium. There are no new initiatives for the Commission.

Thank you for considering this written testimony on behalf of the Maine Charter School Commission. I would be pleased to respond to any questions you may have.