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Good Morning, and thank you for your time. I would like to testify in favor of the additional funding for Maine Maritime Academy. A little bit about myself, I live in Holden and work at Maine Maritime Academy in the IT department as a Systems Integration Specialist, primarily working with Admissions and Financial Aid; I also on the board of MSEA-SEIU.

Additional funding for Maine Maritime Academy is critical. We have the opportunity to be recognized as the #1 Maritime Academy in the US and perhaps the world but we cannot achieve this running at our current levels of funding. Presently, comparable institutions SUNY, Texas A&M, Cal Maritime, etc receive roughly 44% of their operating budget from their state. We receive 22% of our operating budget from the state. Similarly, institutions within the state that have a comparable number of FTEs receive around 44% of their operating budget from the state. This leaves us at a bit of a loss and while we do quite well, according to a study from the Georgetown Center on Education and the Workforce out of 4500 colleges studied we are number 6 in terms of return on investment.

The lack of parity with regard to funding however has a lot of negative consequences the main one being that we have higher tuition than most comparable schools. Other schools are able to capitalize on that fact. Maine Maritime Academy is 483% more expensive to attend than Mass Maritime for in-state tuition and out of state tuition is 49% higher (source the US Department of Education and College Scorecard). Mass Maritime is able to use this information to attract students who may otherwise choose to attend Maine Maritime Academy.

I also know that our graduates tend to become endeared to our state. I know of a number of former students that purchase property in the state, vacation in the state, and after some seetime even become employed in the state. I feel strongly that an investment in our institution brings a good return on investment for our state.

I thank you for your consideration and I implore you to keep the additional funding for Maine Maritime Academy in the budget.