

David Pierson  
Westbrook  
LD 512

Hi, my name is David Pierson and I'm a professor at the University of Southern Maine. I'm here to testify in support of LD 512 An Act to Promote Student Enrollment and Degree Completion in the University of Maine System by Providing Tuition Waivers to Eligible Students. Over the past year, the University of Maine system has experienced significant student enrollment declines due in part to the Free Community College Program. Many of our students have switched over to the community colleges to complete their course credits. While Maine's community college tuition was always less than UMS campuses, we really cannot compete with free. Our goal is to make sure that all of our students achieve their life and career goals, including completing a four-year degree. UMS does not have the deep endowments of the private colleges, so we are more tuition dependent for our overall funding. Out of fairness we ask the State of Maine to provide the same tuition waivers they currently provide to its community colleges.