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TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF

L.D. 1128

AN ACT TO ADDRESS STUDENT HUNGER AND NUTRITION THROUGH EXPANDED ACCESS TO FREE MILK IN SCHOOLS

Senator Rafferty, Representative Brennan and members of the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee. I am Steven Bailey, executive director of Maine School Management Association, testifying on behalf of the legislative committees of the Maine School Boards Association and Maine School Superintendents Association, in support of L.D. 1128.

This bill is a simple step to make sure our students have something nutritious to drink by providing free milk to all students who wish to have it. L.D. 1128 also provides milk to students who bring their own lunch. Currently only students who are provided a full school nutrition prepared meal are eligible to get milk with their meal. At this time, these meals are provided free of charge to students and their families. Students bringing their lunch are required to purchase milk to drink with their lunch. Providing milk for free also takes away any stigma attached to reduced or free meals and drinks tied to income levels.

A change urged within the bill is to provide a non-dairy milk substitute for students with dairy allergies or sensitivities in addition to milk.

Our Associations are in agreement that milk should be provided for free to those students bringing their lunch from home, and encourage the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs to vote ought to pass.