



Support of LD 154: An Act Regarding Special Education Funding for So-called Minimum Receiver School Administrative Units

Senator Rafferty, Representative Brennan, and Distinguished Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs, my name is Gay Anne McDonald and I am the Executive Director for the Maine Administrators of Services for Children with Disabilities (MADSEC). MADSEC is a membership organization of over 400 special education professionals, representing close to 300 private and public school special education administrators and Child Development Services special education directors across the state.

On behalf of MADSEC, I am providing testimony in support of LD 154: An Act Regarding Special Education Funding for So-called Minimum Receiver School Administrative Units.

Under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), all students have the right to a free, appropriate public education, and students who are in need of special education services have the right to receive those services at no cost to the parents. Special education services fall on a continuum, ranging from minimal costs to high costs. Special education costs falling in the high range, especially if unexpected, can have a significant financial impact on school administrative units, specifically those school districts who are 'minimal receivers'.

It is imperative that our students with disabilities receive the special education services they deserve and require by law, and for our state to support our Maine students with disabilities.

An amendment to raise the state share of a school administrative unit's special education costs under the essential program and services school funding formula to 55% is a step in the right direction to support Maine public schools in providing the needed special education services to students.

MADSEC encourages the Committee to vote 'ought to pass' LD 154.

Thank you for your time, consideration, and service to our state.

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