

LD 1458—Ought to Pass
An Act to Increase Funding for the Maine School of Science and Mathematics
Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs
April 23, 2023

Senator Rafferty, Representative Brennan, and distinguished members of the Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs, greetings. My name is Michael Delorge and I am a class of 2020 graduate of the Maine School of Science and Mathematics (MSSM). I urge you to support LD 1458 to fund the school that afforded myself and other graduates an outstanding education while giving us the tools to contribute to our state in the future. The passage of this bill helps ensure a better future for the school that my peers and I attribute to our success.

I am originally from Biddeford, Maine, and attended Biddeford High School for my freshman year before embarking on my journey to MSSM for my last three years of high school. At MSSM, I gained practical skills that set me up for academic and professional success. I learned how to manage my time, advocate for myself, and engage in self-discovery. I left home for MSSM at age 15 and formed indescribably close friendships and life-long memories. At MSSM, I was a part of the varsity cross country, volleyball, and track teams; Student Senate; the astronomy club, the award-winning jazz band; and the Maine Youth in Government (YIG) program, generously hosted in the Augusta Statehouse.

Youth and Government and my MSSM education in social sciences and policy changed the trajectory of my life. Before attending YIG, I wanted to be a doctor. Now, I attend the University of Maine pursuing a career in public health policy. I currently research Maine's substance use crisis, intern part-time in a congressional constituent service office, and was recently elected student body president at UMaine for this upcoming academic year. MSSM made these passions and experiences possible. I hope to use these experiences made possible by my MSSM education to tackle Maine's healthcare challenges in my future career.

With MSSM having received flat funding since 2017, it has been unable to provide these same programs and services or attract new students, faculty, and staff to its Limestone campus. Rather, it has had to eliminate positions, slow wage growth, and reduce student services. This bill helps to restore funding to reasonable levels, allowing MSSM to continue providing the quality education that our state and its students deserve.

I am grateful to be an MSSM graduate and I hope that you will support LD 1458 to ensure that Maine's future students have access to these same opportunities and many more.

Sincerely,
Michael Delorge
Saco, ME
Maine School of Science and Mathematics Class of 2020
University of Maine Class of 2024