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Testimony of Senator Mattie Daughtry introducing
LD 503, An Act to Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue to Fund the Maine
Community College System
Before the Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs
April 26, 2023

Senator Rotundo, Representative Sachs, and Esteemed Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs, my name is Mattie Daughtry, and I proudly represent Senate District 23, which includes Brunswick, Freeport, Harpswell, Pownal, Chebeague Island, and part of Yarmouth. Today I am pleased to introduce LD 503, “An Act to Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue to Fund the Maine Community College System.”

LD 503 would provide funds for general repairs, deferred maintenance items, modernization of campus buildings, and educational equipment at all 7 campuses of the Maine Community College System (MCCS). It has been 5 years since the Legislature approved – and Maine voters strongly supported – a small \$15 million bond for MCCS. In the following years, Maine has come to rely heavily on MCCS to assist with a number of challenges. Each time, they have risen to the occasion.

I’ll list a few examples here. MCCS designed secure ballot drop boxes and designed and printed respirator splitters and face shields to help Maine through the COVID-19 pandemic. MCCS helped get trained Mainers into classrooms when teachers and other PK-12 staff had to work remotely due to COVID-19 outbreaks. MCCS contributed equipment and staff to help meet health care needs.

Now, Maine was fortunate to have dedicated funds to allow MCCS to ramp up and launch hundreds of new training programs in order to boost the economy. Maine Jobs and Recovery Funds were allocated to MCCS, and these funds are being used to train thousands of Maine workers in all industries from health care and precision machining to electric vehicle repair, heat pump installation, and welding.

Through these actions, MCCS has proven that it is a careful and effective steward of state dollars. For this reason, the Legislature supported the proposal for Free Community College. As a result, enrollment is up across MCCS, and more young Mainers are seeing community college as an option. Now is the time to ensure that MCCS student can learn in appropriate space and a safe environment that helps them prepare for their future careers.

To be clear, none of the COVID-19 funding that MCCC received since the last bond can be used to repair, renovate, or replace the aging infrastructure on their campuses and at their satellite locations. Additionally, the current Part II of the biennial budget has earmarks to continue free college and for wage increases and other ongoing costs. But again, these funds cannot be used to repair, renovate, or replace HVAC systems, roofs, or sidewalks.

Below are a few examples of how each of the colleges would use their portion of the bond revenue.

NMCC	Improve security systems and parking lots
EMCC	Replace roof, improve sidewalk and parking lot safety
WCCC	Pointing bricks and improving residence halls
SMCC	Point bricks, improving HVAC systems and learning spaces
CMCC	Updating HVAC systems
YCCC	Improving HVAC systems, building hyflex classroom space, and enhancing parking lot safety
KVCC	Repairing roof and windows, improving HVAC systems, and paving

If I missed anything (and I'm sure I did!), then I know that representatives from MCCC will also be testifying today and would be available for the work session to go into more detail.

I thank you for your time, and I would be happy to answer any questions you might have.



Mattie Daughtry

Assistant Senate Majority Leader, Senate District 23

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