

Carol Wishcamper
Freeport
LD 1544

Honorable members of the Taxation Committee:

I strongly support L1544, an Act to Improve Economic Security for Maine Children by Establishing the Maine Dependent Tax Credit designed to reduce child poverty in Maine.

With the expiration of the enhanced Federal Child Credit which reduced Maine child poverty by almost half, many families are re-experiencing the stresses of poverty. It has been estimated by economists that the Federal Child tax credit would have a 1000% return on investment per year (\$10 for each \$1 spent.

My husband, Joe Wishcamper, and I have been involved directly in a Direct Basic Income pilot, the Magnolia Mother's Trust, a program of Springboard to Opportunities in Jackson, Mississippi. The results of four cohorts of families have been amazing beyond expectation. We are currently working with Quality Housing Coalition, Victoria Morales, on Project Home Trust, to begin a similar initiative in Southern Maine.

Social and educational programs are important to family well being but there needs to be a foundation of adequate available cash for families to rise above the debilitating stress of not having money to meet the most basic of needs.

We have seen the impact.

We hope the Taxation Committee will take this opportunity to structurally provide the conditions for all Maine children to have access to a safe, healthy childhood leading to successful experiences. throughout their lives.

Thank you for your careful attention to this critical matter that has the potential to change many many lives.