

Senator Grohoski, Representative Perry, and honorable members of the Joint Standing Committee on Taxation: my name is Lindsay Bellissimo and I am a resident of the city of Sanford. I am writing you today to testify in favor of LD 1544: An Act to Improve Economic Security for Maine Children by Establishing the Maine Dependent Tax Credit.

My young family received the expanded federal CTC when we needed it so badly and the refund let us buy what we needed for our child only to discover this year we didn't qualify and we even owed money this year to the IRS.

I have seen in my career as a social worker how increasing refundable credits of all kinds, help low income people the most to afford the things most of take for granted that we can just order on Amazon or buy at the store on the way home. I have seen how a tax refund has helped a family with the security deposit so they could move closer to their work and into a better apartment. And I have seen their sadness and anxiety when the refund they thought would solve their financial crisis, doesn't exist.

Increasing the Dependent/Child Tax Credit and making it "Fully Refundable" is a proven policy that targets the people who need the tax refund the most and it helps our communities flourish. It has been shown that investing in families with low income by expanding programs like the child tax credit, helps their children their whole lives, supporting higher educational attainment, better health, and higher earnings as adults.

Many low income families in Maine are still struggling to recover from the financial burdens the pandemic put on all of us. LD 1544: An Act to Improve Economic Security for Maine Children by Establishing the Maine Dependent Tax Credit will help our children, their families, our communities and our state for

many years. The benefits far out weigh the cost of this program and it would help lift many children out of poverty. I believe we should do whatever we can to reduce the effects chronic poverty has on our children and families. You have the power to do something that has been proven to work to help reduce poverty. I am asking you to please vote, Ought to Pass, on LD 1544.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Lindsay Bellissimo

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