



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Terry Sutton

*President*

Chip Leighton

*Vice President*

Yemaya St. Clair

*Secretary*

Jennifer Wilson

*Treasurer*

Joann Bautista

Terry Davies

Lauren Gauthier

John Roberts

Elaine Rosen

Kini Schoop

Maurice A. Selinger III

Jay Tansey

Lannie Welch

55 Portland Street

Portland, ME 04101

207.775.0026

info@preblestreet.org

Hello Representative Meyer, Senator Baldacci, and Members of the Committee on Health and Human Services,

My name is Mark Swann, and I am the Executive Director of Preble Street. I am submitting testimony today in support of 2197: An Act to Strengthen the Health, Well-being and Academic Success of Children and Their Families Through Increased Community Support of the Boys & Girls Clubs of Southern Maine.

At Preble Street, our mission is to provide accessible, barrier-free services to empower people experiencing problems with homelessness, housing, hunger, and poverty and to advocate for solutions to these problems. Underlying this mission, and all our work, is a strong sense of community and responsibility to ourselves and to each other. This includes encouraging the development of young people and families, as these individuals play a deeply important role in our communities. Preble Street is proud to provide nutritious, prepared meals to the Boys & Girls Club of Southern Maine on a daily basis, and we are proud to support this bill.

An investment in young people is an investment in the future of our communities and our state. All children need at least one adult in their lives who believes in them, nurtures them, and encourages their interests. For some children, environments like the Boys & Girls Club may be where they find these connections, as well as the support and stability necessary for healthy development. The connections children make in supportive environments with their peers provide them with the tools to grow into confident and well-adjusted adults. By providing funding to the Boys & Girls Club of Southern Maine to improve their space and increase their capacity, our state is investing in the children, communities, and future of Maine.

On behalf of Preble Street, I ask that you please vote in favor of this funding.

Thank you.

Mark R. Swann  
Executive Director  
Preble Street



United Way  
of Southern Maine



