



Testimony to the Joint Standing Committees on Appropriations and Financial Affairs and Housing and Economic Development.

LD 210 "An Act Making Unified Appropriations and Allocations from the General Fund and Other Funds for the Expenditures of State Government and Changing Certain Provisions of the Law Necessary to the Proper Operations of State Government for the Fiscal Years Ending June 30, 2025, June 30, 2026 and June 30, 2027."

Dear Honorable Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs and Honorable Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Housing and Economic Development,

I am writing on behalf of the Steering Committee of FUSION: Bangor a rising professional's organization under the Realize Maine Network, which is funded by the Maine Development Foundation. FUSION: Bangor was founded in 2005 and is a program of the Bangor Region Chamber of Commerce.

FUSION:Bangor is the area's networking group of engaged rising professionals. The organization works to connect the residents of the area to each other, engage with the community and transform the Bangor region into the preferred place to live, work and play in Maine.

Since 2005, FUSION has played an instrumental role in shaping the Bangor region into a vital place for young professionals. It regularly offers social, civic, volunteer and professional opportunities for community members, and plays an active role in collaborating with local businesses and organizations.

We have been fortunate to collaborate with regional businesses, educational institutions and the members of the Realize Maine Network. We strive to connect

new residents to business, community, and social networks through the various events we offer. In November of 2022, FUSION held their first summit that brought 150 community, education and business members to discuss Social Equity Impact, Community Engagement and Partnerships and Education and Workforce Development. This event was highly regarded in our community, and we continued our Summit event in 2023 with a focus on Education and Workforce Development, and again in 2024 with a focus on Innovation and Entrepreneurship. In addition to our Summit, FUSION engages our community in monthly networking events, supporting our local nonprofits through community volunteerism, and other social activities.

We would not be able to fully succeed in our mission of connecting and retaining our region's rising leaders without continued funding and support from the Realize Maine Network.

On behalf of FUSION: Bangor, we thank you for your continued support in building community, knowledge and leaders in our region.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Maria Andrew". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Maria Andrew

FUSION: Bangor

Steering Committee Chair

Maria Andrew
Fusion:Bangor
LD 210

Please see attached letter.