

Kate Chase
Lewiston
LD 210

Testimony to the Maine Appropriations and Finance Committee

Dear Members of the Committee,

My name is Kate Chase and I am the Aspirations Coordinator at Lewiston High School. I am writing to express my strong support for expanding free community college programs in Maine. We have many students taking advantage of free community college across our state but in Lewiston, we see even more value in this as this program particularly benefits our New Mainers. Many families who have moved to Maine seeking a better life face significant barriers to higher education. A key challenge is that many do not qualify for FAFSA or other traditional grant funding, making it financially impossible for them to pursue a college education. Free community college has knocked down this barrier for our students and is a lifeline for them to establish a better future for themselves and their families and in turn grow Maine's economy. This investment not only benefits the individuals directly but strengthens our workforce, making Maine a more vibrant, diverse, and economically prosperous state.

I urge you to continue and expand funding for free community college initiatives, ensuring that all Mainers, regardless of their background, have access to higher education.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Kate Chase
Aspirations Coordinator
Lewiston High School