

MAINE SERVICE CENTERS COALITION

60 Community Drive • Augusta, Maine 04330 • (207) 623-8428

Testimony of the Maine Service Centers Coalition 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

Senator Rotundo and Representative Gattine, Senator Rafferty and Representative Murphy, and esteemed members of the Joint Standing Committees on Appropriations and Financial Affairs and Education and Cultural Affairs, the Maine Service Centers Coalition is providing testimony in support of fully funding General Purpose Aid for Local Schools at the 55 percent level as proposed in LD 210 and as required by law.

The Maine Service Centers Coalition, comprised of 26 towns and cities across the state, articulates the importance of healthy and thriving service center communities, advocates for public policy that supports and contributes to the economic and social viability of our communities, and collaborates with municipal officials, legislators, state agencies and non-profits to pursue quality of life for all who live and work in our state.

Since 2021, Governor Mills and the Legislature has fully funded K-12 education at the 55 percent level in accordance with the will of Maine voters. Our Coalition members appreciate this commitment to our schools and municipalities but, most importantly, to our students. Full state funding is vital for them. With it, our schools are able to provide students with quality educations and opportunities to learn, explore and grow.

Full state funding also provides relief to homeowners and businesses whose property taxes pay for the many services our cities and towns offer and our surrounding municipalities rely on. Property owners have borne the brunt of increased costs for these services and for the ever growing financial responsibilities placed on municipal governments.

It is for these reasons we ask you to support full funding for General Purpose Aid for Local Schools at the 55 percent level.

Thank you for your time.