

To: Senator Joseph Baldacci, Representative Suzanne Salisbury, and Honorable members of the committee

From: Audrey Piltch

Re: Testimony in Support of LD 135, An Act to Provide Compensation to Members of the Permanent Commission on the Status of Women to Enhance Equitable Commission Participation from Across the State

Esteemed members of the committee, I write to you as a girl raised in Maine who now is continuing my education at university in a city where I am very conscious of my experience as a woman.

Throughout high school and even largely into middle school, I was always aware of moving through the world as a girl—it shows up in little moments that you can't put your finger on, the overt and disheartening headlines, and even well into my classes at college, where women can be reduced to numbers and statistics in horrific historical events. As a 19-year-old, I want to feel safe and seen in my home state.

We've made incredible progress but still more work needs to be put forth, especially in a new age of repealed protections and pushback to the equality movement. This extends to the small actions, like the fair compensation for the dedicated members of the Permanent Commission on the Status of Women.

Let us show up for Maine's citizens, especially those who are lacking opportunities and equality, including all of our women of color, immigrant women, queer women, mothers, and women facing discrimination. Change comes in small steps, and equal pay is essential to supporting those who can champion that change.

Again, I hope to feel my voice heard in Maine, and therefore urge you to vote "ought to pass" on LD 135.

Respectfully submitted,

Audrey Piltch

Freeport