



February 24th, 2025

Testimony in opposition to Language Part VV of LD 210

Senator Rotundo, Representative Gattine, and distinguished members of the Committees on Appropriations and Financial Affairs and Health and Human Services.

My name is Aluel Athian, and I'm a college student in Maine. I'm also a Legislative Fellow at Maine Youth Power, a youth-led movement fighting for human dignity and a livable future for all of Maine. Today, I'm here to urge you to oppose Language Part VV of LD 210.

The specific budget cuts in this bill disproportionately target people of color and noncitizens, those who are the most vulnerable in our communities. This bill increases the already crushing costs for poor people and noncitizens. By cutting needed assistance and adding taxes on everyday products you are killing people who are already fighting for their survival. An increase or implementation of taxes not focused on the richest in the country is a direct attack on us working class people. This bill contributes to the classist idea that poverty is a moral failure and that poor people deserve to be punished by struggling for their basic human rights.

Immigrants who rely on government assistance often come from countries devastated by war and exploitation perpetrated by the United States and other global powers. While our country extracts trillions from the Global South through goods produced under human rights violations, the people coming from these regions are judged and berated simply for trying to survive. Meanwhile, the wealthy continue to benefit from millions in tax cuts and loopholes.

Our state, nation, and world have the resources to ensure an affordable and comfortable life for every human being. Yet, our government prioritizes the wealthy and uphold systems of bigotry like white supremacy, racism, sexism, and ableism to maintain the status quo. It's time to normalize human compassion and work to build a fairer future. I urge you to stand with us and oppose this bill.

Once again, I urge you to oppose Language Part VV of LD210.

Thank you for your consideration,