

February 25, 2025

152 North Rd
Sebec, Maine 04481

Testimony in Support of LD 98

An Act to Include School Counselors in the Educators for Maine Program

Senator Rafferty, Representative Brennan, and members of the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee, as a former counselor educator and certified school counselor in Maine, I strongly support LD 98, which seeks to expand the Educators for Maine Program to include school counselors as eligible positions.

School Counselors are educators. They are certified by the Maine Department of Education just like teachers are. They serve all students in the school, as the role defines. They provide an important service to schools supporting the academic, career, and social emotional needs of all students in Pk-12 to help them achieve success in school and make plans for their future.

To earn a 075 School Counselor certificate in Maine, one must have a bachelors degree and a master's degree. Today's master's degrees in School Counseling most often require 60 credits of coursework, a significant investment on the part of the student. As a counselor educator I saw many wonderful school counseling students struggle with debt from student loans.

As I am sure you are aware, there is a serious shortage of school counselors in Maine. Ensuring that school counseling students can apply for the Educators for Maine program is one significant and fiscally responsible way to address this workforce shortage.

I urge you to support LD 98 132. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Deborah Drew

Deborah L. Drew, Ed.D., LCPC, 075 School Counselor