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LD 34

To whom it may concern,

As a Maine teacher for the last 28 years, a department head, class advisor, and a parent of three children who graduated from Maine public schools, I am always an advocate for quality public education. Because of this, I strongly support raising the minimum wage for public school teachers in Maine. Teachers are the backbone of our education system, shaping the minds of future generations and contributing immeasurably to the growth of our state. However, many teachers are underpaid for the incredible work they do. Other jobs with similar college requirements start at a much higher wage. Raising their wages is not just a financial necessity; it's an investment in our children's future and a recognition of the vital role educators play in our society.

My son went into trades, and after three years of high school graduation, and no college debt, he will be making the same income as me. I am thrilled for him, but it's disheartening how little teachers are valued.

Teachers work long hours, often beyond the school day, and face increasing responsibilities, yet their compensation does not reflect the importance of their work. Ensuring that educators are paid fairly will not only improve their quality of life but will also help retain and attract passionate, qualified professionals to our Maine schools.

By raising the minimum wage for public school teachers, we show our commitment to the educators who dedicate their lives to the success of our students. It is time we value their hard work and create an environment where both teachers and students can thrive.

Thank you for your consideration on this bill.