

TESTIMONY NEITHER FOR NOR AGAINST

L.D. 32—AN ACT TO REPEAL THE LAWS REGARDING NET ENERGY BILLING

AND

L.D. 257—AN ACT TO ELIMINATE THE PRACTICE OF NET ENERGY BILLING

February 27, 2025

Senator Lawrence, Representative Sachs, and members of the Committee on Energy, Utilities, and Technology. I am Steven Bailey, executive director of Maine School Management Association, testifying on behalf of the legislative committees of the Maine School Boards Association and Maine School Superintendents Association neither for nor against L.D. 32 and L.D. 257.

We understand that net energy billing is a complicated issue that is subject of much debate by legislators, interest groups and public officials. We do not seek to wade into the specifics of that debate, but instead simply to note the impact that this program has had on our schools and their energy costs.

We know of at least 60 school districts that have signed net energy billing contracts, resulting in substantial energy savings at a time of unpredictable energy prices. Many districts report savings ranging anywhere from tens of thousands of dollars to up to \$100,000 per year.

These are meaningful amounts for a school district. Less money spent on energy means more funds for teachers, programming, or to use to limit the property tax burden on residents. During challenging school budget seasons, any savings are appreciated.

Again, we are not seeking to weigh in on the overall merits of these particular proposals, but we hope you will recognize the impact of these policies on our school and municipal budgets. We hope our schools' existing energy contracts are honored moving forward, and we do not want to see energy costs rise for our schools.