

TESTIMONY REGARDING L.D. 543

An Act to Add a Personal Finance Course to the State Graduation Requirements in High Schools

Senator Rafferty, Representative Murphy, and members of the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee,

My name is Rob Callahan, and I am a Maine Administrators of Career and Technical Education (MACTE) member. I am providing testimony today on behalf of Maine's CTE Directors regarding L.D. 543. MACTE does not take a position for or against this bill but would like to offer the following considerations.

L.D. 543 proposes adding a requirement that all public and private schools in Maine incorporate elements of a firearm hunter safety course into their curriculum no later than grade 9. While we recognize the value of firearm safety education, Maine's CTE Directors have concerns about how this mandate may impact Career and Technical Education (CTE) programming and student access to critical workforce training. Specifically, we raise the following questions:

- **Local Control:** We believe curriculum decisions should remain within the purview of local school districts.
- **Graduation Requirements:** If this course becomes a mandatory component of high school graduation, what existing requirement would be removed to accommodate it? The addition of such requirements may inhibit a student's ability to access CTE programming.
- **Elective vs. Requirement:** We encourage consideration of offering this course as an elective or an after-school program rather than a mandated graduation requirement.
- **Curriculum Alignment:** Previously enacted curriculum alignment efforts under L.D. 436 could be impacted, potentially requiring a restart of that process.
- **Fiscal Impact:** Would this bill require additional funding, and if so, should a fiscal note be attached?

We appreciate the opportunity to share our perspective and look forward to further discussions on this matter in future work sessions. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Rob Callahan

Lewiston Regional Technical Center, Director

Maine Administrators of Career & Technical Education