

Jacob Hanin
Knox
LD 328

Greetings. I am a fifth year teacher at a public high school in Waldo County. In my early 30s I changed careers, and received my teaching degree in 2020 from USM, after deciding that this was how I could best serve my community in line with my personal interests and abilities.

When I'm asked *why* I became a teacher, I typically defer to Horace Mann, who said, "one is successful who has discovered and developed their talents, and expressed them in service to the world."

In other words, I didn't go into teaching for the money. Nobody in my graduating class from USM's teacher training program said they were in it for the money. Nobody that I work with has ever had any delusion that they teach for the money.

Instead, every teacher I know and every staff member I work with currently has reached the same conclusion as me: that the best way we can contribute to a strong, just, and vibrant future for our community is to help cultivate strong minds, just hearts, and vibrant souls in our young people. The belief in this work is what ultimately ties me to my peers in the public education system. It's a self-sacrifice - a life of financial struggle - that I choose because it seems that important to me.

Teachers serve their communities (and countries) no less than our armed service members, our state and federal employees, and our health workers and first responders. Most teachers are not asked to sacrifice our lives, it's true, but we are asked to sacrifice our financial self-interest, to sacrifice our creative dreams, and to sacrifice our working lives in order to serve others' interests and dreams. We are on the front lines with our young people, day in and day out, trying to help them reach their best possible futures.

It seems that a secure retirement would be a small thing to ask in return for a life of sacrifice that our teachers make. As one of many thousands of Mainers who sacrifice their TODAY for a better TOMORROW, I ask that you help in supporting our own personal tomorrows. I ask that you consider funding this bill to provide crucial medical coverage for our retired public servants.

Thank you for your time.