

Leanne Candura
MSAD#51, North Yarmouth
LD 817

Testimony in Support of LD 817 - An Act to Remove Restrictions That Prohibit
School Administrative Units from Making Purchases Through Cooperatives

Submitted to the Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs

By Leanne Candura
On Behalf of the MSAD #51 School Board
March 12, 2025

Dear Members of the Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs,
My name is Leanne Candura, school board chair of MSAD#51, and I am submitting
this testimony on behalf of the MSAD #51 School Board in strong support of LD 817
- An Act to Remove Restrictions That Prohibit School Administrative Units from
Making Purchases Through Cooperatives.

As stewards of public education, school boards are responsible for ensuring that
taxpayer dollars are spent efficiently while providing the highest quality education
possible for our students. Cooperative purchasing agreements could allow school
administrative units to leverage collective buying power, reduce costs, and increase
efficiency in procurement processes.

Currently, restrictions that prevent SADs from participating in cooperative purchasing
unnecessarily limit our ability to secure the best pricing and services for our schools.
Our legal team at Drummond Woodsum has advised us that Maine Law does not
allow us to use cooperative purchasing agreements for "building" projects over
\$250,000, which would include an artificial turf field. These restrictions create
inefficiencies, drive up costs, and hinder our ability to allocate resources effectively
where they are most needed. LD 817 seeks to remove these barriers and provide
school districts with the flexibility needed to make fiscally responsible purchasing
decisions.

By allowing school administrative units to participate in cooperative purchasing
agreements, LD 817 will:

- Reduce Costs – Cooperative purchasing enables schools to take advantage of bulk
pricing and competitive contracts, leading to significant cost savings on essential
goods and services.
- Improve Efficiency – Streamlining the procurement process allows administrators to
focus more on educational priorities rather than navigating cumbersome purchasing
restrictions.
- Enhance Access to Quality Products and Services – Cooperative agreements often
include vetted vendors that meet high standards of quality and reliability, ensuring
that schools receive the best value for their investments.

School budgets are increasingly strained and it is imperative that we remove
unnecessary regulatory barriers that limit our ability to maximize resources. LD 817
represents a commonsense approach to procurement reform that will benefit students,
educators, and taxpayers alike.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge this Committee to support LD 817 and move it
forward for passage. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Leanne Candura
MSAD #51 School Board Chair