

TO: Senator Rafferty, Representative Murphy
Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs

FROM: James Allard, Learning Commons Librarian, Central Maine Community College

RE: Testimony in support of LD 680, An Act to Support Higher Education in Maine by
Providing Funds to Maine's Community Colleges

DATE: March 17, 2025

Senator Rafferty, Representative Murphy and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs, I am James Allard, I live in Lewiston and I am the Learning Commons Librarian at Central Maine Community College. I am writing to you today in support of LD 680

My job consists of helping students find credible resources for their assignments, assisting them in the navigation of our online classes learning management system (Brightspace), connecting students with our tutors, and instructing students in the use of the various technologies available to them in the Learning Commons. I've included some student testimonials below.

"The Librarians are the MVP's of this place! I can always count on them to meet my needs whether its subject related, a Booking problem, or I need something printed. They always get the job done! Which makes my life so much easier."

"The Learning Commons has been a great resource for me. I really appreciate the quiet and comfortable study environment which helps me focus on my work without distractions. I've learned how to use different databases and research tools more effectively."

"The Learning Commons is the best place to get work done on campus. It has all the resources I need to get any and all my work done. The double monitors on the computers make doing writing and research so much easier and the study pods are perfect for long work sessions. The librarians are so helpful in all subjects and research. They have helped me so much with hard research projects and even just learning how to use the bus station! The Learning Commons is definitely my favorite place in the school." -Tori Wile

"Coming back to school after 30 years the Learning Commons is wonderful. Everything was helpful from can you take a second look at something, to finding facts, not opinions, about a subject." -Jamison McAlister

I believe that the financial support provided by the Student Retention and Success Bill will go far in improving the services we offer to our students. These funds would allow us to add additional quiet study spaces, expand our information literacy education services, provide additional tutoring, and increase our ability to improve our access to credible academic information resources. The Learning Commons can continue to be progressive in our adoption of technology that improves student learning. By expanding our services, we will: reduce our student's anxiety, provide additional academic supports to them, and give

them as many opportunities as possible to succeed in their educational endeavors, all of which will benefit them long after they have graduated.

Thank you for your time and consideration.