

Paul Johnson
Brunswick
LD 700

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

My name is Paul Johnson. I am a social work professor at the University of Southern Maine and I am the grievance representative of the faculty union at the University of Southern Maine (AFUM). We represent 700 full time faculty at all seven campuses of the University of Maine System.

I offer this testimony today on behalf of the MEA in SUPPORT of LD 700, An Act to Promote Student Enrollment and Degree Completion in the University of Maine System by Awarding Waivers of Tuition and Fees to Eligible Students.

The Governor and Legislature have been pro-active and forward thinking in their approach to the Community College System. For several years now, the state has funded the free community college program and we unequivocally support this program.

While we support the free community college program, we have concerns that the program is enticing students to enroll in a free two year program, even if their needs may be better met at the University of Maine campus. There is a significant difference between two year and four year institutions .