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Testimony of Representative Suzanne Salisbury testifying in support of
**LD 468, An Act to Address Food Insecurity by Helping Maine
Residents Access Locally Produced Food**

Before the Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

Senator Talbot Ross, Representative Pluecker and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry. I am Sue Salisbury, and I represent House District 128, which includes part of Westbrook. I am here today to testify in support of **LD 486, An Act to Address Food Insecurity by Helping Maine Residents Access Locally Produced Food.**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this this important bill. When I signed on as co-sponsor of this bill, I had no idea what was about to happen at the federal level related to nutrition. Recently, the United States Department of Agriculture cut \$660 million from the Local Food for Schools Cooperative Agreement Program in 2025. Another \$500 million was also cut, which supported The Local Food Purchase Assistance Cooperative Agreement program, which provides support to food banks. These programs were the results of years' worth of research and data that show providing healthy food options not only increases the health outcomes of communities, but also helps local farmers get their products into schools.

Despite Secretary Rollins saying that these programs are “non-essential,” we know that they are vital to keeping our communities healthy here in Maine. That is why continuing this funding and providing opportunities for Maine residents to access locally produced food is even more imperative.

Thank you for your time and consideration on this bill. I encourage you to vote ought to pass on this legislation, and I hope we can work together to keep this funding.

<https://www.msnbc.com/top-stories/latest/trump-usda-cuts-schools-food-banks-rollins-rcna196050>

<https://www.politico.com/news/2025/03/10/usda-cancels-local-food-purchasing-for-schools-food-banks-00222796>