

Philip Christensen  
Fort Fairfield  
LD 361

PHILIP H. CHRISTENSEN

103 Page Road, Fort Fairfield, ME 04742

Phone: 207-472-3143, Cell: 227-1644, E-mail: PHChristensen@gmail.com

March 23, 2025

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

I am Philip Christensen. I am here to support LD 361, "An Act to Support the Francis Malcolm Science Center."

I live about three miles from the Science Center in Fort Fairfield, Maine. After a lengthy career with the US Department of Agriculture, I returned to my family farm. I got involved with the Science Center to use my leadership skills to help the Board of Directors move to a more public based non-profit organization and recover from the impact of a struggling economy.

I spend a lot of time helping others repair the building, supporting the Boy Scout projects at the Center, and seeking support and donations.

I helped keep things going during the Covid shutdown.

The Science Center is suffering financially from the economy and the shutdown but is enjoying a great recovery in supporting schools and thrilling students thanks to five dedicated volunteer educators. However, they cannot keep devoting the many hours each week to plan, develop and deliver programs. And they cannot keep up with the increasing demand from dedicated teaches throughout Aroostook County. We need your financial support while school support and donations grow.

I am greatly rewarded for my time and effort. My reward is the excitement and smiles I see on the faces and in the voices of the students that I see at the end of their learning experiences at the Center. They are interactively learning things in the planetarium, in the classroom, and on the trails that they cannot experience anywhere else with trained educators.

One day in particular motivated me. I was at the center when a group of learning disabled children came out of the Planetarium. The excitement and joy that I saw and heard seemed like they had just returned from a trip to the Moon. What a great reward for me.

Please help the Center survive and continue the transition to paid educators and the growth of donations and school support by approving LD-361.

Philip Christensen