

Dear Senator Grohoski and Representative Cloutier, and Honorable Members of the Committee on Taxation:

I am writing to support both [LD 1089](#) and [LD 1047](#), acts to increase our State revenue through a more fair tax system.

I live in a high income family. We have many ways to save “pre-tax” dollars, including retirement plans, health savings accounts, college savings plans, mortgage interest deductions and even charitable deductions which might help a part of our community but are distributed in undemocratic ways. Aside from our State Park pass, we rarely have an opportunity to consider donating back into State Government or a more fair place for [participatory budgeting](#). At this time, tax revenue and our legislative budgeting system is the process we have to ensure that we all are paying to create the communities we deserve.

We know that there is a wide wealth and income gap in our State, and that it is self-perpetuating. Although I benefit from being married to a high-earning spouse, my career in higher education earns me [poverty wages](#). If I were to simply depend on my own income as a contingent professor for the State of Maine, to live, I would be in constant stress, unable to eat a healthy diet, access health care, maintain reliable transportation or secure safe housing. This is just so unfair. I’m particularly aware that the reason my personal income is so low is because my family income is not taxed at the rate it should be, leaving public Higher Education to navigate “austerity” (and because we overpay the athletic and administrative jobs, but that’s for a different piece of testimony).

We ALL benefit when all of us have our basic needs met, and we simply must stop saying we can’t afford to do this, when we know Maine’s tax code could be more fair without hurting the people who will pay a bit more and likely not notice.

I don’t know where the “no new taxes” mantra took root among democrats but it just isn’t a practical or values-based commitment. Taxes are just another form of sharing, and we build community through all of us bringing what we have to our shared table. Some people have more money, and they/we can pay more.

Finally, while I do not mind paying more taxes for our shared investments, I do find it insulting and frustrating to be tasked with paying more than my share, through endless charitable giving for what should be services paid for by Government. We know, for example, that accessing health care, child care, violence response services, ambulances, snow plowing, weather prediction, etc. etc. is all nonpartisan, yet so many

Republicans now make a case for using all they want and need but refusing to share in the creation or care of this infrastructure. This seems genuinely like one of those “What we learned in Kindergarten” lessons and we must push back on the notion that there is no shared responsibility, only shared taking.

Thank you,

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