

Testimony on LD 1089 and LD 1047

Alex Silver, Scarborough

Senator Grohoski, Representative Cloutier, and members of the Taxation Committee, my name is Alex Silver and I live in Scarborough. I am testifying in support of LD 1089: An Act to Permanently Fund 55 Percent of the State's Share of Education by Establishing a Tax on Incomes of More than \$1,000,000 and LD 1047: An Act to Impose an Additional Tax on Certain Unearned Income. Both of these bills are consequential within my community of education professionals.

In an era of steady teacher attrition, I chose to become a K-12 educator by enrolling in the accelerated teacher prep program at the University of Southern Maine. As a second year teacher with a master's degree, I can expect to earn \$61,000 in about 5 years. This number is significant—it's the approximate threshold at which I would pay the current tax rate of a millionaire; yet socially it would mean I'd reached the lower-middle class.

Many of my remarkable colleagues—I'm thinking of educational technicians in particular, professionals who work as hard or harder than teachers, usually with the most challenged students—will likely never reach this \$61,000 marker. In fact, they would be financially better off at a fast food restaurant. This situation is not sustainable; on hard days at school, it's insulting.

How would any of us be considering these testimonies without our teachers? If we are to maintain and grow an infrastructure that truly develops Mainers, permanently funding public education at a 55% state contribution is strategically wise. I see debate about excavating money from smaller sources—cigarettes, poverty housing, direct care—yet these two concisely written bills would together raise hundreds of millions of dollars. Earned and *unearned* income are what's at stake. I urge you to vote “yes” on both bills, in support of working families and our collective resilience. Thank you for your time.

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