

Good morning, Chair Nicole Grohoski, Chair Kristen Cloutier and distinguished members of the Taxation Committee,

My name is Meghann Carrasco. I reside in the city of Westbrook and am the Founder and Executive Director of a nonprofit childcare center in Gorham, Maine called Seedlings to Sunflowers. I am writing to you in full support of LD 1089 and LD 1047. The time is now, to take a look at the data surrounding the benefits of taxing the most wealthy Mainer's and how it can support funding for our communities and schools. Instead of making decisions about which area of our state budget to cut funding from, we should be looking to increase our State's revenue by supporting those working, living and breathing within its boundaries and taxing those making over a million dollars a year at a different rate.

We must invest in the future of this State and our nation, and this starts with ensuring our schools, childcare facilities, headstart and communities are adequately funded. Research has found that other states, such as Massachusetts, New Jersey, and California have taxed those making over 1 million dollars a year and wealthy people didn't move away – they kept investing, and their states gained funding for education, healthcare, and infrastructure. Maine can do the same, without hurting job growth or small businesses. LD 1089 would provide funding for public pre-k through 12th grade education. Universal Pre-K in Maine has been the goal for too long, and we have the means to do it with these proposed bills. Investing in the future of education, children and families will ultimately save our state economy in the long run. This is a long term solution with long term and lasting benefits.

The injustice around continued tax breaks for wealthy individuals demonstrates the value placed on the families and individuals with different socioeconomic statuses. As the cost of living and raising families has increased over the years, it seems unfair to hold those making just over \$60K per year to the same tax standards of millionaires and billionaires. Maine has a long standing history of providing a fair and equitable economy and we need to continue the tradition in Maine of caring for our people.

Imagine a world where working families could see their childcare bills stabilize or go down. Imagine a world where educational systems could thrive and school systems were able to support their educators and staff. Imagine a world where communities could keep up with their growing populations. The roadmap to this dream is a clear reality with these two proposed tax bills.

Mainer's of all socioeconomic classes deserve a democratic approach to providing a fair, equitable and efficient tax code. As you all serve the State of Maine it is your duty and responsibility to ensure that prosperity is obtainable for ALL.

Again, I am urging you to pass the proposed bills LD 1089 and LD 1047.

Thank you for your time.

Meghann Carrasco
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