

Amy Larkin
Arundel, Maine

Senator Grohoski, Representative Cloutier and honorable members of the Taxation Committee, my name is Amy Larkin from Arundel, and I am writing to you today in favor 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.

I moved to Maine just as I was about to start 7th grade. Middle school is a difficult time to start school in a new place, and I was nervous and a bit overwhelmed about having to make new friends. But, thanks in large part to some incredible teachers, I adjusted to my new surroundings quickly. One teacher in particular, Mary McCarthy, the art teacher at Middle School of the Kennebunks, recognized my passion for art and fashion and asked me to join her honors art class.

I spent countless hours in the art room that year, sometimes having lunch with my new friends while we tested out art supplies and cut photos from magazines. I felt so comfortable there, and grew confident in both myself and my interest in art. I took honors art classes in high school and went on to earn my BFA from Massachusetts College of Art. I'm now self-employed as an illustrator. I know that Mary McCarthy's encouragement and support is a big part of where I am today.

Arts education is often one of the first things to get cut when school budget shortfalls happen. I know firsthand that arts education can make all the difference in a student's life, and I want all Maine students to have the opportunity to meet their Mrs. McCarthy. Our schools need funds and our 55% state share should be nonnegotiable.

We could ensure that schools get the state funding they need by making our tax code fairer. A millionaire's tax would affect less than 1% of Mainers yet have tremendous impact on the entire state, our communities, our schools, our children. A millionaire shouldn't be taxed at the same rate as a teacher or a nurse or anyone earning over \$61,600. This is an opportunity to invest in Maine and its children and I hope you will vote "Ought to Pass" on LD 1089. Thank you so much for your time and consideration of this bill.

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