



Maine School Superintendents Association



## TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF

L.D. 1003

OFFICERS—2024-25

### AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE RETIREMENT BENEFIT IMPROVEMENT FUND

March 26, 2025

PRESIDENT  
MARIA LIBBY  
MSAD 28/FIVE TOWN CSD  
CAMDEN, 04843

Senator Tipping, Representative Roeder, and esteemed members of the Labor Committee, I am Eileen King, the executive director of the Maine School Superintendents Association, testifying on behalf of the MSSA Legislative Committee in support of L.D. 1003, An Act Establishing the Retirement Benefit Improvement Fund.

PRESIDENT-ELECT  
DR. ANDREW DOLLOFF  
YARMOUTH SCHOOL DEPARTMENT  
YARMOUTH, 04096

Maine superintendents firmly believe that our state must do more for the financial well-being of our educators. Our association supports increasing pay for our current educators, and we believe Maine must do more to ensure our teachers can keep up with the cost-of-living during their retirement.

VICE PRESIDENT  
RHONDA SPERREY  
RSU 64/MSAD 64  
CORINTH, 04427

SECRETARY/TREASURER  
BENJAMIN SIROIS  
VALLEY UNIFIED REGIONAL  
SERVICE CENTER  
FORT KENT, 04743

For more than a decade, benefits for Maine's retired educators have simply not kept up. Inflation has continually outpaced cost-of-living adjustments. Pension cuts from previous administrations have reduced the purchasing power of retirees' Maine-PERS benefits. These challenges do not just impact current retirees but also make it harder for schools to recruit future educators in the years ahead.

PAST PRESIDENT  
PATRICIA HOPKINS  
MSAD 11  
GARDINER, 04345

L.D. 1003 accomplishes two important objectives: it inches our state towards the goal of improving affordability for retired educators, and its structure would not force legislators to sacrifice other important policy initiatives. Instead of appropriating funds each year, L.D. 1003 would instead require "an amount of surplus General Fund revenue be transferred annually."

EILEEN E. KING  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

By approaching the issue in this manner, this bill ensures that the state continues to maintain its existing commitments – education, school meals, etc. – while collecting a portion of any excess General Fund revenue and contributing it towards this goal. This would make steady progress towards boosting our retired educators' benefits, providing crucial financial security at a time when housing, groceries and other costs are only climbing. They deserve peace-of-mind after decades of service to Maine students.

49 COMMUNITY DRIVE  
AUGUSTA ME 04330  
(207) 622-3473  
(800) 660-8484

*Leading for equity, excellence and opportunity for all Maine Students*