



March 26th, 2025

Testimony in support of LD1089: 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

Senator Grohoski, Representative Cloutier, and esteemed members of the Taxation Committee.

My name is Eli Durand-McDonnell, I am from Bar Harbor, Maine and I am the Policy Coordinator at Maine Youth Power, a youth-led, youth movement throughout rural and suburban Maine fighting to win human dignity, equity and a livable future for all. I am here today on behalf of my organization to ask that you support LD1089: 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.

A month ago, my colleague Anghy Tehuitzil and I testified in opposition to Part VV of LD210, which aimed to repeal the unemployment hardship exception for state-funded SNAP and TANF benefits for noncitizens. As we argued that day, Maine should not be balancing its budget on the backs of our most vulnerable community members. Instead, we noted that there are several other viable policy options to address the budget shortfall. Today, I am advocating for LD1089 as one of those viable policy options.

LD1089 would make sure that Maine's wealthiest residents are simply paying their fair share, and that our budget shortfalls are being addressed in an equitable manner. Not only would this help avoid balancing the budget on the backs of our most vulnerable, it would also act as a direct investment in this state and its young people. In my work as Maine Youth Power's Policy Coordinator, I am often in conversation with young people from across the state. Many times, I have heard from fellow young people that while we would love to stay in Maine, the lack of education and healthcare infrastructure can make the idea of staying long term or raising a family here very daunting. This bill and its specific focus on funding public education would help more young people throughout the state thrive, while also not raising taxes on or cutting services for those who cannot afford it.

Once again, on behalf of Maine Youth Power, I urge you to support LD1089.

Thank you for your consideration,
Eli Durand-McDonnell