

TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO

L.D. 211

AN ACT TO MAKE SCHOOL SAFER FOR STUDENTS WITH EPILEPSY AND OTHER SEIZURE DISORDERS BY REQUIRING SEIZURE ACTION PLANS AND TRAINING IN SCHOOLS

March 31, 2025

Senator Rafferty, Representative Noonan Murphy and members of the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee, I am Robbie Feinberg, the director of communications and government relations of the Maine School Management Association, speaking on behalf of the legislative committees of the Maine School Boards Association and the Maine School Superintendents Association in opposition to L.D. 211, An Act to Make School Safer for Students with Epilepsy and Other Seizure Disorders by Requiring Seizure Action Plans and Training in Schools. Our associations represent over 1,700 locally elected school board members, 260 school districts and their superintendents.

Our school leaders fully support the goals of this measure and believe deeply in ensuring our staff are fully prepared to assist and respond to students with epilepsy and other seizure disorders. However, we have deep concerns that this bill would add another burden onto our school districts, reduce time for student learning, and duplicate training that we already provide.

Maine schools already proactively work to ensure that all our students are safe and cared for when they enter a school building. If a student has a seizure disorder, schools are already required to make an individualized 504 plan for that student, [as mandated](#) under federal law.

Administrators, staff, school nurses, medical professionals and families come together to create these plans. For a student with a seizure disorder, these plans may include allowing a student to carry medication and allowing them to leave class to deal with the effects of a seizure. Staff who work with that student are already required to be trained in how to respond to any medical events. Every school takes this work very seriously.

L.D. 211 would require that “all school employees subject to professional development must, for a minimum of one hour of self-directed study, review seizure disorder material”, and that every school administrative unit provide “age-appropriate seizure education programming to all students beginning in the 2026-2027 school year.”

While we applaud the goal of ensuring that everyone in a school building is trained, this would be a huge lift for local school staff, who are already dealing with an already substantial load. Our members do not believe this is necessary, when our current practices already ensure that staff are prepared to respond to medical emergencies.

We are even more concerned about adding new training requirements for students. This would impose another instructional mandate dictating what our students must learn each year, and we worry it would get in the way of helping them make progress in academics. At a time when schools are still helping so many children recover academically from the effects of the pandemic, we do not believe in adding additional mandatory courses.

These trainings would also cost money – for materials, staff time, recordkeeping and compliance – without state assistance. Our school budgets are already stretched thin and cannot handle any new unfunded mandates.

Again, our associations support the goals of this bill, but we believe that our schools' current practices and 504 plans already ensure that our students are safe, and our staff are well-prepared to respond to epilepsy and other seizure disorders. We ask you to oppose L.D. 211.

Thank you for your consideration.