



Maine Community College System

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

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TO: Senator Talbot Ross Representative Pluecker
Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture Conservation and Forestry
FROM: Becky Smith, Director of Government and Community Relations
RE: Testimony in Opposition to LD 1141, *An Act to Increase the Procurement of Maine Foods by State-funded Institutions* as originally drafted
DATE: April 1, 2025

Senator Talbot Ross, Representative Pluecker and Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, my name is Becky Smith and I am testifying today in opposition to LD 1141, as originally presented, on behalf of the Maine Community College System. It has come to my attention that an amendment will be offered that removes mention of MCCS. If this amendment were to prevail, we would have no position on the bill because it would no longer apply to us.

Having said that we at the Maine Community College System very much appreciate and support the procurement of local foods by our seven colleges, both in food service and our culinary classes. We are of and for our communities—with approximately 95% of our students coming to our campuses from across Maine. In fact, our statutory mission and goals are: *to provide associate degree, diploma and certificate programs directed at the educational, career and technical needs of the State's citizens and the workforce needs of the State's employers. The primary goals of postsecondary career and technical education and the Maine Community College System are to create an educated, skilled and adaptable labor force that is responsive to the changing needs of the economy of the State and to promote local, regional and statewide economic development* (emphasis added). **Title 20-A §12703**. Purchasing local foods and other products, when affordable and available, is part of our mission.

Our seven colleges operate their food services independently. Three of our colleges, like the University of Maine System, use Sodexo—and benefit from their [Maine Course](#) program dedicated to purchasing local foods.

The other four colleges either use different vendors or have in-house food services. Our colleges also have unique dining facilities and meal plans. SMCC has an amazing oceanfront cafeteria (recently featured in Yankee's New England Magazine) that is open to the public and serves thousands of people each day as well as a café on both the Brunswick and South Portland campuses. York County Community College has a small café's that caters to a commuter population. Washington County Community College has a relatively new director of Dining Services who has diversified the offerings for their campus beyond the original basic snack bar and works as an employee of the college.

All of our food service providers look locally to provide nutritious and delicious food for our students, faculty and staff and will continue to do so irrespective of the proposed legislation.

Thank you.