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LD 660

Senator Rafferty, Representative Murphy, and members of the Education and Cultural Affairs

Committee, I offer the following as a Curriculum Coordinator for MSAD 72, which covers the towns of Fryeburg, Lovell, Brownfield, Denmark, Stow and Sweden.

While some of them are reflective of the testimony from MCLA, I have included my own thought as well.

While I deeply value the principles of transparency and public access, I believe this bill does not consider the complexities of the education system in Maine and would, in fact, hinder the creativity and adaptability that are essential to quality education.

First and foremost, Maine's educational system is founded on the principle of local control. Each district is responsible for developing curricula that meet the standards set forth in the Maine

Learning Results for all content areas. These standards are comprehensive and aligned with the needs of Maine's diverse student population. Local districts are best positioned to determine

how to meet these standards in ways that are relevant to the communities they serve.

This bill, however, places undue restrictions on curriculum development by mandating a level of transparency and access that could compromise educators' ability to respond flexibly to the

diverse needs of students. Education is not a one-size-fits-all process. Curricula should be dynamic and responsive to the interests, learning styles, and evolving needs of students. This bill, in its current form, could discourage creativity and the use of innovative, student-centered approaches to learning, as it imposes rigid guidelines on what must be publicly disclosed. The curriculum in Maine is designed to incorporate both foundational content and the flexibility for teachers to bring in recent and relevant information. This ensures that students are exposed to timely and engaging material that reflects the world around them. With the introduction of this bill, there is concern that educators may be forced to limit their instructional choices to only those materials that are strictly defined and disclosed, rather than utilizing emerging and up-to-date resources that enrich the student learning experience.

In addition, our current structure, due to the limitations imposed on districts in terms of funding, increased insurance costs and the increased financial pressure on our communities, our district is currently in the position of having to cut significant services, positions and opportunities for our students for the upcoming fiscal year.

There simply is not the capacity to create and maintain the kind of reporting system that has been proposed. A mandate of this kind would decrease the ability of our district to support our educators in supporting the students with appropriate and timely professional development as needed.

I urge you to consider the significant burden this bill would put on district, the restrictions on creativity and professionalism of our educators (as well as the message that sends to an already overworked population of professionals) and the impact on students of the state of Maine. I also suggest that restrictions of these kinds will further debilitate a system in which devoted individuals are giving unlimited time and dedication to the students of our state.