



Testimony of Brian Elowe before
the Committee on Health and Human Services
in support of
**LD 1389: An Act to Create the Building Opportunity Through
Out-of-School Time Program**
April 8, 2025

Senator Ingwersen, Representative Meyer, and honorable members of the Committee on Health and Human Services, my name is Brian Elowe and I'm the CEO at Boys & Girls Clubs of Southern Maine. I support LD 1389: *An Act to Create the Building Opportunity Through Out-of-School Time Program*.

Boys & Girls Clubs fill the gap between school and home. We provide welcoming, positive environments in which kids and teens have fun, participate in life-changing programs and experiences, and build supportive relationships with peers and caring adults. Boys & Girls Clubs in Maine collectively serve over 8,000 school-age youth at 18 Club sites across the state.

Research shows that afterschool and summer programs, like Boys & Girls Clubs, boost student engagement, improve attendance, reduce risky behaviors, and promote social-emotional growth. With access to homework help, healthy meals, and trusted mentors, kids thrive both in and out of the classroom. However, according to the National Afterschool Alliance, in Maine, for every one child enrolled in an afterschool program, there are five waiting to get in. The impact we create for youths and our communities is clear:

- Parents recognize the benefits of afterschool and summer programs with 83% of Maine parents agreeing that afterschool programs help working parents keep their jobs.
- Of our members who attend at least two times each week (most attend daily), over 90% graduate on time and avoid costly issues like drugs and teen pregnancies.
- Lifetime investment in afterschool programs has a 3:1 economic lifetime return.

The BOOST bill is an exciting step toward expanding access to out-of-school time programming for Maine families, especially those that are at-risk or underserved. This grant program would help community-based organizations, including the Boys & Girls Clubs, create new programs, grow existing ones, and overcome barriers that prevent families from accessing quality care. We strongly recommend the passage of LD 1389.

Respectfully submitted,



Brian C. Elowe, CEO, Boys & Girls Clubs of Southern Maine