

Michelle Conners
Kennebunk Free Library
LD 1404

Senator Rafferty, Representative Murphy, and Honorable Members of the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee:

My name is Michelle Conners, and I am a resident of Waterboro, as well as the Executive Director of Kennebunk Free Library. I am testifying in strong support of LD 1404, which seeks to create a working group to study the needs of Maine's school and public libraries. This group will study library partnerships, facility conditions, access to technology, and the diversity of library collections—critical steps toward strengthening our libraries statewide.

Over the years, I have participated in several evaluations of Maine libraries including with the Maine State Library (Databases), Maine Library Association (Wage and Compensation), and my own doctoral research (Digital Literacy Education). A common thread has been the need for a broader study that would allow for evaluation across issues to occur concurrently, instead of in periodic silos. A coordinated effort statewide will be necessary to assist with prioritizing issues, budgeting, and maximizing efficiency.

I urge the members of this committee to support LD 1404. This study is essential to understanding the needs of Maine's libraries and planning for our future.

I thank you again for your time and would be willing to answer any questions and/or serve as a resource.

Sincerely,
Michelle K. Conners, Ph.D.
Resident of Waterboro and Executive Director of Kennebunk Free Library