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Sara Gagné-Holmes
Commissioner



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April 8, 2025

Senator Ingwersen, Chair
Representative Meyer, Chair
Members, Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services
100 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333-0100

Re: LD 1389 – *An Act to Create the Building Opportunity Through Out-of-school Time Program*

Senator Ingwersen, Representative Meyer and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services, thank you for the opportunity to provide information neither for nor against LD 1389, *An Act to Create the Building Opportunity Through Out-of-school Time Program*.

This bill would create a new chapter of Title 22 that would establish a competitive grant program to expand out-of-school time programming for school-age-youth. This includes enhancing current programs, reducing barriers to participation, and other activities to improve access to these programs. The bill would appropriate \$5 million in General Fund for this purpose and require OCFS to begin issuing grants by 12/1/26 to nonprofits and libraries. LD 1389 would also require monitoring of and reporting on this grant program by OCFS.

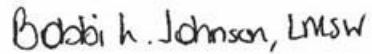
OCFS greatly appreciates the desire to increase programming opportunities for out-of-school time programs, but we are concerned with the significant fiscal allocation proposed in this bill. OCFS already supports care and programming for school-age children and youth through the Child Care Affordability Program (CCAP) and the Integrating Outcomes for Youth (IOY) program. The CCAP rules permit families to receive an award of up to 50 hours of care per week for a school-age youth and allow recreational programs to participate in CCAP as license-exempt providers. IOY promotes health, safety, and resilience; and provides connections to workforce and educational opportunities for Maine youth through OCFS contracts with Boys and Girls Clubs and other community-based organizations.

Ensuring the accessibility of out-of-school time programming for families is an important goal and has been a driving force behind efforts over the last few years to ensure that CCAP could be used to pay for care in recreational programs. The majority of CCAP funding comes from the federal government through the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG), this allows Maine to support out-of-school time care for youth in a manner not wholly dependent on State General Fund.

OCFS appreciates the Committee's ongoing support of the CCAP program as we seek to create an array of opportunities that address the wide variety of needs among Maine youth and families.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions during your deliberation of this bill.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bobbi L. Johnson, LMSW". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly informal style.

Bobbi L. Johnson, LMSW
Director
Office of Child and Family Services
Maine Department of Health and Human Services