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TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO

L.D. 11

AN ACT REGARDING TEMPERATURE STANDARDS FOR SCHOOL BUILDINGS

April 9, 2025

Senator Rafferty, Representative Noonan Murphy, and members of the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee, I am Steven Bailey, executive director for Maine School Management Association, testifying on behalf of the legislative committees of the Maine School Boards Association and Maine School Superintendents Association in opposition to L.D. 11.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on L.D. 11, which would require school boards to adopt and implement a written policy establishing minimum and maximum temperature standards for school buildings. While ensuring comfortable and safe learning environments is a priority for all school leaders, MSSA and MSBA oppose this bill for several reasons.

First, Maine's schools vary significantly in age, size, and infrastructure. More than 500 school buildings were constructed before 1990, with differing heating and cooling systems, levels of insulation, and ventilation capabilities. Schools also range widely in square footage and have undergone different levels of upgrades. A one-size-fits-all temperature standard does not take into account the unique challenges of each building.

Second, school superintendents and administrators already closely monitor indoor temperatures, making decisions in real-time to ensure safe and appropriate conditions for students and staff. Temperature considerations are taken into account daily, including when determining whether students should go outside for recess or engage in other activities. Local leaders are best positioned to assess conditions and make informed decisions based on their specific school environments, and weather conditions.

We oppose imposing statewide requirements, and encourage continued reliance on local decision-making, allowing school boards, superintendents, and facilities managers to address temperature concerns in a way that best serves their students and communities.

For these reasons, I urge the committee to oppose this bill. Thank you for your time and consideration, and I would be happy to answer any questions.