

Testimony of Dr. Amy Johnson, Maine Education Policy Research Institute (MEPRI)

Neither for Nor Against: L.D. 170, Resolve, Establishing a Pilot Program to Reduce Personal Electronic Device Distractions During the School Day

Date: April 16, 2025

Dear Senator Rafferty, Representative Murphy, and Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs,

I regret that we are unable to attend in person today to speak neither for nor against L.D. 170.

The bill language requests that MEPRI conduct a study of the pilot project. We would be glad to serve in that capacity if the Resolve is passed.

In order to conduct this work within existing resources, we would need to have a portion of our next three annual research contracts with the Education Committee dedicated to the Resolve. This would require a medium-sized topic included in our FY2025-26 work plan for developing application criteria and an evaluation plan. Evaluation of the project in FY2026-27 as described would be a large topic (requiring up to one half of our contracted time depending on the number of participating pilot schools); this would include the preliminary report due in November 2026 as well as ongoing data collection throughout the year on the pilot schools. In FY2028 we would reserve a medium sized topic to analyze data and prepare the final report for December 2027.

We can be available upon request to attend the work session to further discuss your intended scope of the proposed evaluation study.

Sincerely,

Amy Johnson

Co-Director, MEPRI