



April 24th, 2025

Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs

RE: LD 1543 An Act to Establish the Maine Green Schools Network

Members of the Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs,

My name is Alicia Heyburn, and I am the Executive Director of Teens to Trails, an organization that supports a statewide network of schools that host Outdoor Clubs. I'd like to share my support of LD 1543 An Act to Establish a Maine Green Schools Network.

A "Green school" means a public school that promotes efficiencies, reduces carbon emissions, supports environmental literacy, and connects studies to climate and clean energy careers. What's not to love? The Green School network will help make this happen by improving communication between schools and partner organizations, simplifying a way to share replicable success, and providing a forum to consider new methods to meet Green School goals. That forum is what is most appealing to Teens to Trails.

We started in 2006, and for 19 years, we have worked with individual teachers and school administrators at more than 100 schools across all 16 counties to offer valuable services to help them meet learning objectives, but we have never had a reliable point of contact within the Maine Department of Education.

We've been part of short-lived strategies like WAVES and the Maine Outdoor Learning Initiative, but have been left dangling when these grant-funded programs expire. We are one of several organizations offering student programs that support Maine's environmental literacy goals and career readiness in climate-ready fields and I'm sure this Green School Network will help us all ensure that our non-profit missions and methods are meeting DOE's needs most effectively.

We strongly urge the committee to support **LD1543**, and the efficiencies and effective results that a Green School Network will provide.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Alicia Heyburn", is written over the "Sincerely," text.

Alicia Heyburn, Brunswick
Teens to Trails, Executive Director

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