

Diane Muir
UNIV OF MAINE
LD 1219

I write today in support of LD1219 to continue funding and increase funding the University of Maine. The University is being penalized unjustly by legislative representatives who just don't seem to get that this University is the future. The future is right here at UMaine. Do you know we're doing cutting edge research? The research is focused on cancer, diabetes, PFAS, a wide array of topics that directly affects you, legislative folk. Wouldn't you love to know that your elderly parents are safe and sound and able to afford their medications? My husband is sickly, 64, looking to retire, and works on average 55 hours a week so we can pay our bills. Does he want to retire, yes; can we afford for him to retire, no. I am 60, have worked at the University of Maine some 30 years as an admin asst and still don't even make \$20 an hour, when in the private sector, somebody with my background in administrative management is making some \$30 an hour. We got a raise this year, only to have it basically taken away because of the increasing costs of our Cigna healthcare plan so it's always one step forward and two steps back. My "raise" ended up being \$12 more in my paycheck. That's the cost of a pound or 2 of decent hamburger. Food costs, housing costs, fuel costs, electricity costs - basic human dignity supplies - we're just not getting ahead. No savings, a small retirement account and maybe by the time I'm 70, I might look forward to retiring. I think the Maine Legislature needs to wake up, stop fighting, I'm democratic, you're republican so I'm not going to talk to you and actually help its constituents survive, past some of these important bills, not the "Maine State Whoopie Pie" bill or the "Flag bill" and focus on something that is important to the State of Maine and it's future. Fund the University of Maine so they can help students, help employees get some decent wages and help Maine's future grow and develop its research.