

Austin Smith  
Boston, MA  
LD 1624

Dear Members of the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee,

My name is Austin Smith. Though I currently live in Massachusetts, I was born in Cumberland, Maine, and continue to spend significant time in the state with deep personal ties. I write in support of this bill to fund summer school and academic recovery programs.

An investment of \$9.3 million is modest compared to the profound, long-term benefits it will yield. These funds will help high school students stay on track to graduate and provide critical support for younger students to build foundational skills and avoid summer learning loss.

Prioritizing districts with high poverty rates ensures the funding reaches students with the greatest need. Education is one of the most effective public investments—each dollar spent today pays social and economic dividends for decades, improving lives and strengthening communities.

This bill is a smart, targeted way to give Maine's youth a better shot at success, support families, and build Maine's future. I urge you to keep this bill moving forward.

Thank you for your service and consideration.

Sincerely,  
Austin Smith, MCP  
Community Planner II for Land Use & Long-Range Planning  
Boston, MA