

Lindell Smiley
Bangor
LD 1543

To: Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs
From: Lindell Smiley, 126 15th St, Bangor, ME, 04401
Date: April 25th, 2025

RE: Testimony in support of L.D. 1543 “An Act to Establish the Green Schools Network”

Senator Rafferty, Representative Murphy, and members of the Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs,

My name is Lindell Smiley. I live in Bangor, and I am a senior at Bangor High School.

I am testifying in support of L.D. 1543, “An Act to Establish the Green Schools Network” because I believe positive climate action should be taken wherever possible, and Maine schools provide valuable opportunities to do so. I believe connecting these schools statewide under the Green Schools Network would greatly assist in bringing many of these potential opportunities coming to fruition.

At Bangor High School, I am the president of our environmental club, S.E.E.D. (Students Ending Environmental Destruction). My participation and leadership in this club have taught me the many benefits of such programs. Hands-on projects appear to be one of the best ways of encouraging education around climate problems and solutions. For example, S.E.E.D. club partnered with the American Chestnut Foundation to give a presentation at Bangor High School about the American chestnut tree and its history with a fungal blight that has driven it to near extinction. We learned about the efforts to breed a chestnut tree resistant to this parasite and planted our own outside the school. Activities such as this get students meaningfully involved in real world initiatives and organizations, which has the dual purpose of enriching their education and improving Maine’s networks of environmental action. This bill would help to provide schools around the state the organization and resources, such as transportation to pursue similar opportunities, more frequently and in greater numbers.

I also recently attended the Maine Youth Climate Summit at UMaine, which environmental clubs from high schools around the state attended. The conference highlighted the value in connectivity between people involved in different environmental organizations and the exchange of ideas for climate action. I heard many inspiring stories of other schools’ planting of gardens, promotion of recycling, etc. The Green Schools Network would be incredibly valuable in uniting Maine’s schools and their respective environmental groups in a cohesive network, fostering further inspiration and cooperation.

On the whole, the creation of the Green Schools Network seems like an obvious step toward improving Maine’s climate education and action. From the integration of sustainable technologies to leadership in advocacy, Maine’s schools are essential partners in the state’s climate plan, and the Green Schools Network would bolster them in this role.

For these reasons, I respectfully encourage you to support L.D. 1543. Thank you for your time and consideration of my testimony.

Sincerely,
Lindell Smiley