

Claire Carter
Freeport
LD 1543

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

My name is Claire Carter, and I am a high school student who lives in Freeport. I am testifying in support of L.D. 1543, "An Act to Establish the Green Schools Network," because I believe that students deserve support and education in helping the environment. The Maine Green School Network will connect schools and their communities, allowing us to work together to create more sustainable schools and provide environmental education to students.

In 4th grade, I watched a documentary about climate change and was left near tears. Since then, it has been very clear to me that it is difficult to make a difference alone. It takes a community, which is why we need to start in schools.

On average, a US student from elementary to high school spends 1,231 hours of their life in school. This education and time should prepare us for our future, for the environmental challenges that we will face. This generation has been left with the heavy burden of climate change, so focusing on environmental education needs to be a top priority. LD 1543 would set students up for real-world success, specifically in environmental careers, to battle this issue. With energy-efficient adaptations IN our schools, students would have access to data-driven learning opportunities. Knowledge is half the battle, and right now, schools lack education surrounding climate change. In my community, I know that Green Schools would benefit many people. Everyone has seen the impacts of climate change, whether it be the fisherman and oyster farmers' jobs becoming more difficult, or families all over dealing with frequent storms, flooding, or power outages. We all see it, but not everyone knows why. By taking the step to implement greener schools, where kids spend most of their time, we as a town can benefit from growing ideas and solutions, and a knowledgeable, rising generation.

LD 1543 would prepare my generation for a sustainable future and start the implementation of sustainable practices in communities statewide. I respectfully urge you to support this bill for these reasons. Thank you for your time and consideration of my testimony.

Sincerely,
Claire Carter