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To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Daniella Bradley and I grew up in South Portland, Maine and attended school in Maine from elementary to high school. I am currently working as a family liaison for an elementary school in Boston, Massachusetts. In my role, I serve as the bridge between home and school for our students by supporting families and providing them with wrap-around services that help to improve their scholar's academic and social emotional growth in school. In my role, I have had the privilege of witnessing the impact of summer learning opportunities for students. When students have been out of school for two months or more, many students experience what is called the "summer slide". The summer slide is a regression in the progress that they have made academically. This means that when school starts in the fall that educators are having to reteach content and skills that were once fluent for our scholars and in many cases the teachers don't have an opportunity to teach this content and instead move onto grade-level content. This has the potential to create gaps in understanding for our students. Significant challenges with content often cause frustration in the learning process, and if left without intervention, may lead to lack of student engagement in the academic content and eventually in the entire school experience. The impact of learning loss disproportionately and negatively affects students with high academic needs, students who are multi language learners, and students whose families live at or below the poverty line.

However, summer learning opportunities, have the potential to mitigate the impact of summer learning loss. It allows students to return to school with some fluency skills and they are able to start school at the beginning of the year without having to play catch up. The need for summer learning opportunities are especially crucial in communities where there are a high number of students with high academic needs, students who are multi-language learners, and students who are currently living at or below the poverty level. These summer learning opportunities not only provide an opportunity for students to participate in academic recovery but it could potentially provide them with life-altering opportunities that could change the trajectory of their future for the better. Summer learning opportunities are often some of the places and spaces where students learn, develop, and harness leadership and skills that they can take forward with them for the rest of their lives to create positive impact in both the local and global community. We hope that you will consider supporting this bill to provide our scholars and the future leaders of Maine with the opportunity to continue their learning over the summer and positively impact their futures.

Thank you,

Daniella Bradley