

**To:** Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs

**From:** Hadley Couraud

**Date:** April 25, 2025

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

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

My name is Hadley Couraud, I am a Board member of the Maine Environmental Education Association, and I live in Norway, ME.

I am testifying in support of L.D. 15443 “An Act to Establish the Green Schools Network”. Students today are growing up entirely in a time of worsening impacts of climate change, and increasing pressures on the natural world. They know that they are inheriting a scary, unknown world. They are also inheriting a resilient, awe-inspiring world, and one in which they each have a role for the future. Thankfully, students and very often their incredibly devoted educators, are prone to appreciating both of these realities.

Providing environmental and outdoor education, place-based learning, real-world skills, and opportunities to learn through projects that help their schools adapt to a changing energy landscape are integral for students in our world today. Thankfully, students here in Maine are growing up in a State that is providing these opportunities. However, we know that these efforts, led by individual schools and individual teachers, can be more accessible and effective.

Creating a Green Schools Network will provide the support system, framework, career pathways, professional development, relationships, and shared learnings to do just that. This Network will support teachers supporting students, as they prepare for their future – in community, in action, and in careers connected to Maine’s natural resources.

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

Respectfully,

Hadley Couraud