

Timothy Wilson  
Portland  
LD 1624

Testimony in Support of An Act to Fund Summer School and Credit Recovery  
Programs through the Department of Education

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

My name is Tim Wilson, and I have had the privilege of serving the people of Maine for more than sixty years. I've been able to serve in many different facets, first as an educator and coach, then as a public servant and, for the last three decades, as an advisor to Seeds of Peace, and Director of Maine Seeds of Program and Camp Director. All this to say is that I write this testimony today as a person who has dedicated their lifetime to education and human rights and also as a father, grandfather, great grandfather, mentor, and deeply invested member of this community.

I have taught in classrooms, coached on fields, led camps, and guided youth from many walks of life. I've worked with young people navigating many complex challenges ranging from poverty and instability to loss and discrimination. One thing I've learned through all my years of service is this that every child deserves to feel seen, supported, and believed in. That sense of belief can be critical, especially when it comes to academic success.

As someone who works closely with youth, I've seen the devastating impact of losing essential resources. When something young people depend on is taken away, the damage to their future can be irreparable. The possibility of summer school going unfunded is exactly that kind of issue.

Summer school and credit recovery programs are not luxuries. They are a necessity. For many students, summer school and credit recovery programs represent a second chance. An opportunity to correct their path, to graduate, and to keep their future wide open.

In Seeds of Peace Camp in Maine, we bring together young people from across our state, the Middle East, South Asia, The United Kingdom, and The United States. And every summer I witness that when young people are given the time, space, and support to focus on growth whether it is academic, emotional, and or personal they rise to the occasion. They become leaders. They become changemakers. But that transformation doesn't just happen. It takes intention and investment. It takes adults who refuse to give up on them.

This bill is a chance to be those adults. It's a chance to say to every young person in Maine, you matter. Throughout my career from teaching in classrooms, to serving as the Chair of the Human Rights Commission, I've seen that the true measure of a community is not how it treats its high achievers, but how it supports those who are struggling.

Passing this bill means standing behind our young people and taking action. It means creating a future in which truly no student is left behind.

Maine cannot afford to lose generations of learners due to not supporting and funding this bill. Which is why I urge you, members of this committee, to vote "ought to pass" to LD 1624.

Thank you for considering my testimony on this important matter.

Timothy (Tim) P. Wilson  
Advisor to Seeds of Peace  
Director of Maine Seeds Program  
Seeds of Peace Camp, Camp Director