

Waterville Office
1 Brooklyn Avenue
Waterville, ME 04901
Tel: (207) 873-5754
Fax: (207) 873-7052
Email: adulted@aos92.org



A PROUD MEMBER OF MAINE ADULT EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

Messalonskee Office
131 Messalonskee High Drive
Oakland, ME 04963
Tel: (207) 465-9134
Fax: (207) 465-4986
Email: adulted@rsu18.org

Come Learn With Us!

Testimony from Adult Educator Kenlyn Clark in Support of LD 1705

"An Act Regarding Adult Education Funding and Oversight"

Apr 30, 2025

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

My name is Kenlyn Clark, and I am the STEM Instructor at Mid-Maine Adult and Community Education.

I am writing to express my heart-felt support for LD 1705, submitted by Representative Holly Sargent. This bill will provide much-needed support to those whose work supports Maine's adult learners.

The bill has two parts. One pays for College and Career Success Coordinators. I have seen first-hand the value of CCS Coordinators in helping our students move from their high school diploma into community college. We all know that the modern work landscape requires skills and training beyond a high school diploma. For students whose families have never pursued higher education, the thought of going to college is very intimidating. Students have told me that their families tell them that "we don't do college" or ask them why they are "wasting their time" getting a degree. These students can also be older than their college peers, which adds to the feeling of not belonging. The CCS coordinators guide these students through the application process, and then give them the ongoing coaching support that first-generation college students need to get into and stay in college until they graduate.

The second part of this bill will guarantee that the full subsidy amount due to each Adult Education program will actually be paid. MMRACE has over 200 students on our roster currently, but I am the only full-time teacher on staff. I am grateful for the support that the local district provides to our school and our students, but other districts do not have the capacity to make up for the state shortfall. I know there are school districts in more rural parts of the state that have cut their Adult Education programs because they cannot afford them with the low state funding allowance. That creates "education deserts" in the neediest communities, and may speed up the decline of these communities as people move to find the services they need elsewhere.

In conclusion, I urge this committee to support this bill, which will provide the funding to fully support Adult Education in Maine so we can help more Mainers achieve their educational and life dreams.

Thank you for your time and for your commitment to adult education.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Kenlyn Clark".

Kenlyn Clark

MMRACE
1 Brooklyn Ave
Waterville, ME 04901
207-873-5754