

Testimony in Support of

LD 1705 An Act Regarding Adult Education Funding and Oversight

April 28, 2025

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

My name is Dr. Sarah Bushey and I am the current College and Career Success Coordinator (CCSC) on the Northern Maine Community College campus. The CCSCs are a group of dedicated professionals who are hired by local adult education programs but based at each of Maine's seven community college campuses. I am reaching out today to bring attention to the importance of having someone in my position on campus. CCSCs serve as the vital bridge between adult learners and successful postsecondary transitions.

Our work is making a difference. CCSCs provide personalized support that helps adults build academic confidence, navigate enrollment and financial aid systems, and persist through the first critical year of college. Many of these learners are first-generation college students, working adults, parents, or returning learners with unique challenges. CCSCs meet them where they are and walk alongside them through this transition.

This model is working, and we can provide data to show increased college enrollment and persistence among adult learners who receive this support. However, the program's future is uncertain without sustainable state funding. LD 1705 recognizes the value of this investment and asks the state to commit to it. Here is some of the data that covers the past 11 quarters that the CCSC has been working with NMCC students:

Number of students served: 342

Number of students referred to Adult Education: 88

Number of students enrolling in community college: 177

Number of interagency contacts the CCSC has worked with: 113

Number of students enrolled or completed workforce training: 31

Number of female students served: 169

Number of BIPOC students served: 43

I am hopeful that these numbers will speak for themselves and that the collaboration between Adult Education and Maine's Community Colleges will continue to benefit adult learners in the community and beyond.

Best,

Sarah Bushey, PhD

College and Career Success Coordinator

SAD 1 Adult Education / Northern Maine Community College