



Augusta Adult & Community Education

22 Armory Street, North Wing, Augusta, Maine 04330

(207) 626-2470

www.augustaadulted.org

Testimony of Dr. Kayla Sikora, Director of Augusta Adult and Community Education

In Support of LD 1705: "An Act Regarding Adult Education Funding and Oversight"

April 29, 2025

My name is Dr. Kayla Sikora, and I serve as the Director of Augusta Adult and Community Education, located at 22 Armory Street in the Buker Community Center in Augusta. I am writing to express my strong support for LD 1705, particularly its provision to fully fund the adult education subsidy in accordance with state law.

For over a decade, adult education programs across Maine have been asked to do more with less. Although the law outlines a formula for calculating what the state owes in subsidy to each program, year after year, we receive only a fraction of that amount. This chronic underfunding has real consequences.

At Augusta Adult and Community Education, we serve hundreds of adults each year—individuals working toward high school completion, learning English, training for careers, and seeking a second chance at education. Our students come from all walks of life, including refugees, young adults who didn't thrive in traditional school settings, and parents who are re-entering the workforce. They rely on us for instruction, support, and opportunity.

Despite the growing demand for our services, inadequate state funding means we struggle to retain staff, expand programming, and meet student needs. We don't have access to buses, nurses, or social workers like many other public school programs. Our instructors and advisors wear many hats and do so with deep commitment to our learners—but it is not sustainable.

I have attached my latest subsidy letter from the state office. Please note that this letter never states the amount of subsidy my program should receive or the degree to which it is prorated. This lack of transparency makes it difficult not only for directors like me to plan our budgets responsibly but also for superintendents and school boards to fully understand how heavily prorated the adult education subsidy truly is. Many are unaware that we are consistently funded at far below what the law outlines, and that this pattern has continued for years.



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LD 1705 is a necessary step toward correcting this inequity. Fully funding the adult education subsidy—clearly and predictably—will allow programs like mine to serve our communities more effectively. It will give our students the resources they need and deserve, and it will recognize the essential role adult education plays in workforce development, civic engagement, and lifelong learning.

Thank you for your time and for your support of adult education in Maine.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Kayla Sikora", written over a horizontal line.

Dr. Kayla Sikora

Director, Augusta Adult and Community Education

22 Armory Street, North Wing – Buker

Augusta, ME 04330



STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
23 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, ME 04333-0023

JANET T. MILLS
GOVERNOR

A. PENDER MAKIN
COMMISSIONER

January 29, 2025

Michael Tracy, Jr.
Augusta School Department
40 Pierce Drive, Ste. 3
Augusta, ME 04330

Superintendent Michael Tracy, Jr.,

This letter is to inform you of your adult education subsidy estimate for FY26. The Maine Department of Education, Office of Adult Education will award adult education subsidy to your adult education program in the fall of 2025. The adult education subsidy calculation is based on your district's FY24 local contribution to adult education and the eligible adult education costs expended during the 2023-2024 academic year. For FY26 budgeting purposes, the estimated subsidy amount is below.

Subsidy estimate for FY26: Augusta Adult Education \$ 279,857.73

Please note that this amount is an estimate only and is not final until the state budget is passed. If you have any questions about this letter, please contact me at 557-2683.

We sincerely, appreciate the efforts of your adult education program and look forward to another successful year.

Sincerely,

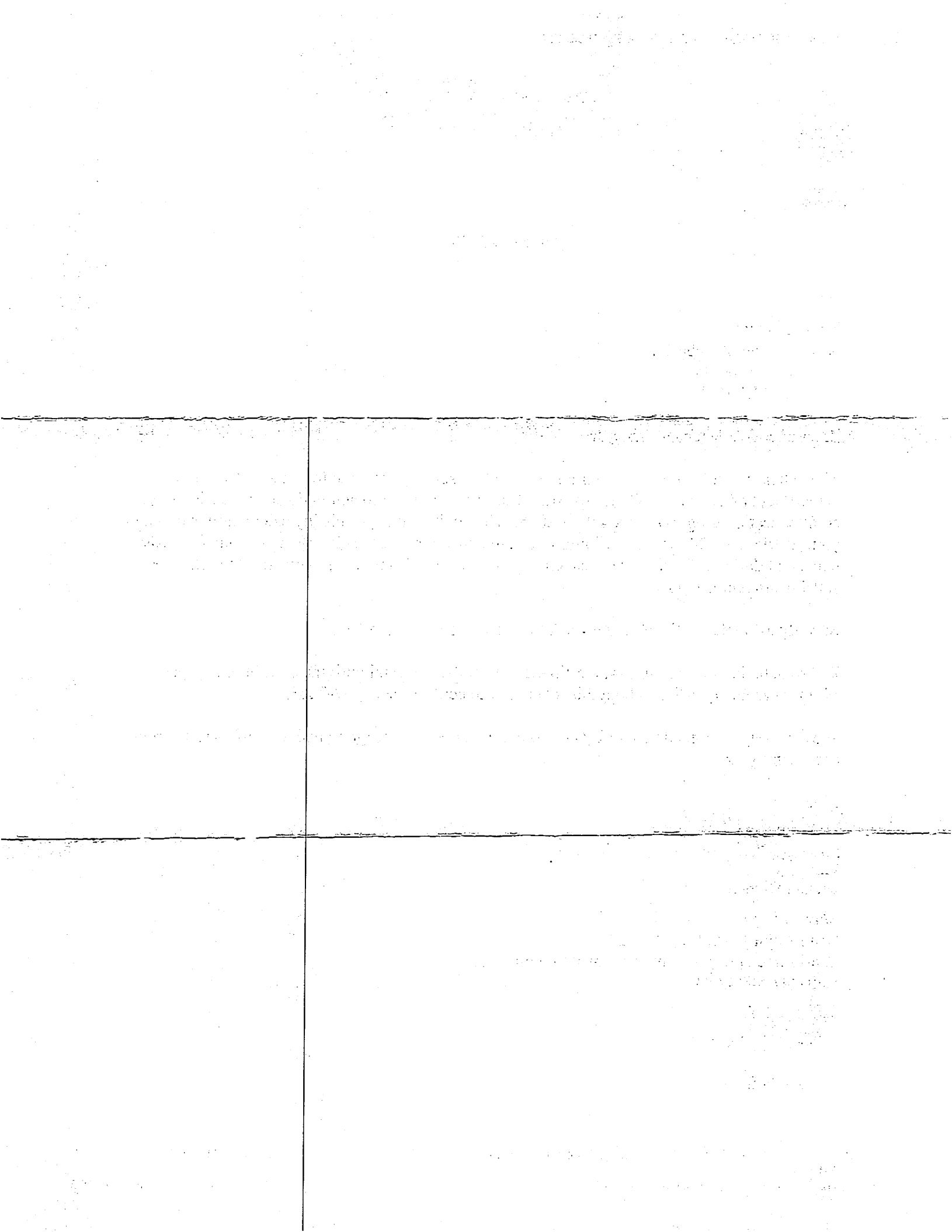
DocuSigned by:

5A48E91E6916439...
Megan Dichter

She/her/hers
State Adult Education Director
Workforce Development & Innovative Pathways
Cell-207-557-2683



cc: Kayla Sikora



Kayla Sikora
Augusta
LD 1705