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TO: Senator Rafferty, Representative Murphy

Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs

FROM: Cait Gant Eliot, ME

RE: Testimony in support of LD 1705, An Act regarding Adult Education Funding & Oversight

DATE: April 30, 2025

Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs, I am Cait Grant, and I live in Eliot, ME. I am also the Vice President of Economic & Educational Development at York County Community College (YCCC). I am writing today as a private citizen who cares deeply about Maine's adult learners to express strong support for LD1705, specifically the Career Advancement and Navigation Program. It is important to note that, although my professional life absolutely informs my testimony, I am not speaking on behalf of the Maine Community College System or York County Community College.

In York County 4.3% of our adult population does not have a high school diploma or equivalent, which is roughly 4,900 individuals. Across the state, the number increases to 4.9% and roughly 35,000 adults who do not have a high school diploma or equivalent. As our state looks to support our existing employers and attract new businesses to Maine, our role in educating our Maine residents becomes critical.

York County Community College's mission is to create an educated and skilled workforce for the State of Maine. One of the ways YCCC has done that is through developing relationships with local educational partners. I have seen the Career Advancement and Navigation Program deepen our connections with our York County Adult Education Centers and to create more meaningful, supported pathways for our adult learners as they make the transition from adult education into our short-term training, and certificate and degree programs. This initiative emphasizes the importance of academic support, success coaching, and individualized planning to promote self-sufficiency and career growth, all of which are necessary for our adult students to advance in their careers.

At York County Community College, we have a dedicated position to facilitate access and create pathways for adult students pursuing their high school diploma or working on their HiSET. This position is embedded at YCCC and collaborates closely with our local Career Center, providing essential resources for career planning and resume building. Our navigator



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has also made strides in supporting multilingual learners, ensuring they have the necessary resources to complete their college coursework. YCCC's adult learners are not just students. They are often parents, caretakers, and are working to support their families. YCCC's learners are sometimes one flat tire, one sick parent, or one closed daycare away from stopping out of their programs. The navigator assists students in connecting with various community resources, including those provided by York County Community Action, the HOPE Scholarship Program, local food pantries, and Goodwill Workforce Solutions. While we cannot remove the barriers entirely, the Navigator can support students in accessing the resources they need to get one step closer to their educational and career goals.

In closing, I urge the committee to support the funding for this vital program. Investing in adult education programs like the Career Advancement and Navigation Program not only transforms lives but also strengthens our workforce and community. Together, we can build a brighter future for all residents of Maine.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Cait Grant,  
Eliot, ME 207-216-4477



**YORK COUNTY**  
**COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

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