



Senator Rafferty, Representative Murphy, and Esteemed Members of the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee, my name is Amy Allen, and I am the Operations Director for the Maine Charter School Commission. I'm submitting testimony today supporting LD #1718 - *"An Act to Establish the Maine Charter School Commission as a Public Instrumentality of the State"*.

I would like to thank the Office of the State Controller and the Department of Administrative and Financial Services for their continued guidance and support with this reclassification recommendation.

I would also like to thank Senator Rafferty and his co-sponsors for bringing this much-needed legislation forward.

Statute *allows* the Commission to "engage professional and administrative staff" but does not define *how* to engage such staff. Over the years, this has been left to interpretation resulting in layers of red tape that are both costly and inefficient. This reclassification will allow the Maine Charter School Commission to hire its own employees, contract directly with vendors, and pay its own bills.

This bill does not change the Commission's mission, funding, or authorizing authority, it simply streamlines the Commission's day-to-day operations and eliminates costly overhead resulting in significant savings - savings that will be redirected to support charter public school students, teachers, and staff.

Thank you for reading my testimony. I will be available for the work session to answer any questions that you might have.