

In Support of LD 1048 “An Act to Increase the State’s Share of Major Capital School  
Construction Costs”

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In its 2023 report to the Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs, the Maine Department of Education stated:

The need for enhanced school construction funding is great, as evidenced by applications for limited state funding in the previous cycles of the Major Capital School Construction Program. In 2010-2011, 71 schools applied for major capital construction projects and only 16 were selected for funding. In 2017-2018, the next rating cycle, 74 applications were submitted, with only seven projects funded. The next application cycle will be initiated in calendar year 2024. While many communities are applying for this funding, the amount of funding available is not sufficient to meet their needs. With an aging stock of school buildings throughout the state, we anticipate continued high demand for state support in shouldering the cost burdens of school renovation and new construction on local municipalities.

And the 2024 Report Card for Maine’s Infrastructure estimates a \$2.6 billion backlog in school construction.<sup>1</sup>

LD 1048 is a long overdue change in the way Maine addresses school construction. Currently only a lucky few receive 100% funding, leaving too many communities out to dry. And this is only going to be worse with skyrocketing costs while the debt limit is held constant. By capping how much a community receives in construction funding by the percentage amount of its EPS funding, we can free up more funds to help other communities faced with crumbling, dangerous and unhealthy buildings.

There never is a magic solution that will instantly address the whole problem. As policy makers, you can make changes that moves the dial in the right direction and LD 1048 will help open the door to a few more projects.

Please vote Ought to Pass and let’s start opening the doors for more safe and healthy schools.

Thank you for your consideration.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://infrastructurereportcard.org/state-item/maine/>