



Testimony in Support of LD 1760:

“An Act to Promote Public Education in Maine by Amending the Laws Governing Student Transfers”

Senator Rafferty, Representative Murphy, and the distinguished members of the Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs, my name is Jacob Posik, I live in Saco, and I represent Maine Civic Action and Maine Policy Institute. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of LD 1760, “An Act to Promote Public Education in Maine by Amending the Laws Governing Student Transfers.”

This legislation is a timely and necessary step toward ensuring that all Maine students, regardless of geographic location, family circumstance, or geographic boundaries, have fair access to the educational opportunities they need to thrive. By clarifying and consolidating the statutes governing student transfers, LD 1760 creates a more transparent and equitable system for families navigating our state’s public education options.

Key Reasons for Support

- **Transparency and Equity:** The bill introduces essential requirements for transparency in how school districts manage capacity and approve transfer requests. Mandating the publication of available seats per grade ensures that parents work with clear and consistent information.
- **Non-Discrimination:** By prohibiting discriminatory transfer policies based on factors such as residential address, ability, disability, race, ethnicity, sex, or socioeconomic status, LD 1760 reinforces the state’s commitment to fairness and equal opportunity for all students, ensuring compliance with the Maine Human Rights Act.
- **Oversight and Accountability:** The bill strengthens oversight by requiring school administrative units to report annually on their transfer decisions and the rationale behind them to the Department of Education. This data collection will improve our understanding of transfer patterns and allow the state to identify inequities or barriers that need to be addressed.
- **Clarified Parental Rights and Appeals:** LD 1760 ensures that families are provided written explanations for denied transfers and guarantees a straightforward appeal process through the Commissioner and, if necessary,



the Maine Board of Education. This reinforces the role of parents in educational decision-making and serves as a safeguard against the arbitrary denial of student transfer requests.

- **Support for Special Populations:** Homeless students and students receiving special education services often face disproportionate barriers to stability and access. This bill protects their educational rights by aligning state policy with the federal McKinney-Vento Act and maintaining funding parity after transfers.
- **Regional Cooperation:** Finally, LD 1760 encourages collaboration among school administrative units and education service centers by requiring mutual transfer policies. In a state like Maine, where student populations are often small and scattered, this type of cooperation is essential to educational efficiency and equity.

Conclusion

LD 1760 represents a pragmatic and student-centered reform to Maine's educational framework that gives Maine families more agency over their child's education. We respectfully urge the Committee to vote "Ought to Pass" on LD 1760. Thank you for your time and consideration.