



TESTIMONY BY JASON JUDD, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, EDUCATE MAINE TO
JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS

IN SUPPORT OF LD 1764

**“AN ACT TO ENSURE EQUITABLE STAFFING RATIOS ACROSS THE STATE FOR
CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS IN AREAS WITH SMALLER
STUDENT POPULATIONS”**

MAY 6, 2025, 1:00 P.M.

Chairs Rafferty and Murphy, and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs, I am Jason Judd, Executive Director of Educate Maine. I am pleased to offer testimony in support of LD 1764: An Act to Ensure Equitable Staffing Ratios Across the State for Career and Technical Education Programs in Areas with Smaller Student Populations.

Educate Maine is a business-led education organization which champions career readiness and education attainment of Maine people by supporting education along the full continuum of life – from early childhood through adulthood. We also offer research and Maine-specific data to help inform your decisions on key education issues. One of our strategic priorities is to expand the Maine workforce and ensure students are career-ready when they graduate high school. Career and technical education programs offer students rigorous coursework aligned to industry standards, dual enrollment opportunities, and industry-specific certifications. These programs make sure students are career-ready and able to transition successfully into postsecondary education and the workforce.

Maine has 27 CTE schools offering a range of programs like carpentry, culinary arts, outdoor leadership, welding, and others. Maine CTE enrollment continues to grow and now includes more than 10,000 students participating in CTE programs. With workforce shortages persisting in almost every industry, it is essential that we continue to support CTE programs to thrive. Educate Maine is one of the organizations supporting a Southern Maine Regional CTE Advisory Committee, a group made up of more than a dozen employers. These employers constantly share how essential it is support CTE schools given how effective these schools prepare students to join the workforce.

In 2022, Educate Maine facilitated a project for the Maine State Board of Education to determine the CTE systemic barriers and offer solutions to these barriers so that more Maine students can participate in these programs. Barriers identified included high school graduation credits, scheduling, transportation, teacher certification, and others. One of the barriers identified was funding challenges for rural CTE schools with lower student populations. This bill proposes a solution to adjust staffing ratios for CTE schools in rural regions.

I strongly encourage members of the committee to support this bill. Our rural CTE schools are an integral part of the solution to address our workforce challenges statewide.