

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF

L.D. 1764

OFFICERS

PRESIDENT
Faye Anderson
RSU 22

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

May 9, 2025

PRESIDENT-ELECT
Joseph Long
MSAD 35/RSU 35

VICE PRESIDENT
Roy Gott
RSU 24

IMMEDIATE PAST
PRESIDENT
Jane Osborne
Deer Isle-Stonington CSD

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Steven W. Bailey

MAINE COUNCIL OF
SCHOOL BOARD
ATTORNEYS

Isabel Ekman, Esq., Chair

Senator Rafferty, Representative Noonan Murphy, and members of the Joint Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs, I am Steven Bailey, the Executive Director of the Maine School Boards Association, testifying on behalf of the MSBA legislative committee in support of L.D. 1764, An Act to Ensure Equitable Staffing Ratios Across the State for Career and Technical Education Programs in Areas with Smaller Student Populations.

School boards support this bill because it allows for reasonable staffing ratios for Career and Technical Education classes in smaller CTE Regions and Centers to assure more students will have access to programs that lead to meaningful career paths.

We need those students to stay in Maine and help fill job vacancies that will increase as people retire. Those retirements already are having an effect and Maine needs to continue work to support the development of replacement workers with 21st century skills.

A report commissioned by the Maine Connectivity Authority estimates the state is expecting to have a shortfall of 3,240 workers in broadband jobs. We also face a shortage in the health care industry at the same time our population is aging into retirement. Maine has one of the highest percentages in the country of people older than 50, and one of the lowest percentages of those between 18 to 49. Career and Technical Education prepares our students to find meaningful work after graduation in fields that support Maine residents and provide good paying jobs for these students.

We need to support our CTE teachers and schools. The proposed student to teacher norm for CTE is 13-to-1 in larger CTE catchment areas, and 8-to-1 in smaller catchment areas (under 1,000 students).

As it stands now, if schools are only getting an allocation for half a staff member for student counts less than 13, they will have an increasingly difficult time finding instructors who need fulltime work. As a result, programs will not continue, students will not be able to enroll in these classes, and the desired workers will not be produced. MSBA urges you to vote OTP on L.D. 1764.