



Maine School Superintendents Association



## TESTIMONY NEITHER FOR NOR AGAINST

OFFICERS—2025-26

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EILEEN E. KING  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

49 COMMUNITY DRIVE  
AUGUSTA ME 04330  
(207) 622-3473  
(800) 660-8484

### AN ACT TO AMEND THE LAWS GOVERNING CARBON MONOXIDE DETECTORS

Senator Beebe-Center, Representative Hasenfus, and members of the Criminal Justice and Public Safety Committee. I am Eileen King, executive director of the Maine School Superintendents Association, testifying on behalf of the MSSA Legislative Committee, neither for nor against L.D. 2012.

While our organization strongly supports the intent of this legislation, and we believe in doing whatever we can to ensure students are healthy and safe, superintendents are concerned that the law could represent an unfunded mandate that could cost some districts thousands of dollars.

Current state law requires educational facilities to install “at least one approved carbon monoxide detector in each building of the educational facility that is used for educational purposes by at least 6 persons for at least 4 hours per day or more than 12 hours per week.” L.D. 2012 would amend that rule to require detectors to be installed “by the manufacturer’s requirements and in accordance with the requirements of the Life Safety Code of the National Fire Protection Association as adopted by the Commissioner of Public Safety.”

For schools, this would effectively mean adding detectors in several additional areas of each school building – places like mechanical rooms, kitchens, science labs, CTE shops, and portable classrooms. We support these changes and firmly believe they would make our buildings safer for every student. We’ve unfortunately seen too many examples in recent years of children being hospitalized because of carbon monoxide poisoning, both in Maine and across the country.

Improved detection would mean a safer learning environment for our students. Parents would feel safer when their child heads off to school, and staff members would feel safer and more protected at their workplace. L.D. 2012 is a positive step in enhancing school safety and protecting our kids.

Our concern lies in the implementation of this bill and how it will be funded. Based on our conversations with the school building experts in MSMA's Risk Management Department (who provide expertise to Maine schools on school building infrastructure and safety), we expect that adding new carbon monoxide detectors could cost thousands of dollars for some schools -- and that burden would fall hardest on our smaller, rural districts, whose buildings tend to be older and in need of more maintenance and renovation. At a time when property taxpayers in nearly every Maine community, are already feeling stretched, we cannot add new mandates and costs to local schools and towns. We ask that if the state adds these new requirements, it also adds requisite funding to help our local districts upgrade and comply. We believe strongly in the intent of L.D. 2012, but our local communities need the state's help and assistance.

Thank you for your consideration.