

Mayor and Council Offices

Mark Dion

Mayor

January 21, 2026



Testimony of Mark Dion, Mayor of the City of Portland,
In Support of
LD 1892, An Act to Establish Procedures for School Construction Projects
Before the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs

Senator Rafferty, Representative Murphy and distinguished members of the Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs, my name is Mark Dion, Mayor of Portland and I write to provide testimony in support of LD 1892 on behalf of the City of Portland.

This bill would establish the Maine Public School Financing Authority and the School Construction Debt Service Fund, which would receive certain state tax revenue, lapsed balances in the General Fund, and federal funds, which would be used to provide funding for school construction projects.

The City of Portland supports Senator Brennan's proposal because the city is in favor of proposals that drive more badly needed resources into school construction, and the city appreciates Senator Brennan's bold approach to address a major statewide issue. When it comes to funding school construction, the need is great, both in our city and around the state.

To give a sense of what school leaders, educators, and our students are facing:

- We have many aging school buildings, including two high schools and one middle school that still have sections over one hundred years old. Part of Portland High School dates back to 1863.
- A 2016 review of our sixteen school buildings identified over \$160 million in deferred maintenance.
- Critically, the challenge of deferred and on-going maintenance costs is not unique to Portland and exists across the State as seen in the Governor's Commission on School Construction which identified \$11 billion in facilities needs

I do not believe our city, or any one municipality, is truly able to keep up with the need for and ever-escalating cost of school maintenance and school construction.

For these reasons, the City of Portland respectfully urges the Committee to support this proposal, including Senator Brennan's amendment, and move this solution forward.

With appreciation for your time and your consideration.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Mark Dion", with a large, sweeping loop at the end.

Mark Dion
Mayor
City of Portland, Maine