



17 Market Square, South Paris, ME 04281

Victoria Forkus, Managing Director  
Maine Community Action  
Partnership  
c/o Community Concepts, Inc.  
17 Market Square  
South Paris, ME 04281  
207-441-6657

Jason Parent, Executive  
Director/CEO  
Aroostook County Action Program  
771 Main Street  
Presque Isle, ME 04769-1116  
207-764-3721

James Martin, CEO  
Community Concepts, Inc.  
240 Bates Street  
Lewiston, ME 04240  
207-739-6553

Suzanne Walsh, CEO  
Kennebec Valley Community Action  
Program  
101 Water Street  
Waterville, ME 04901  
207-859-1579

Claire Berkowitz, CEO  
Midcoast Maine Community Action  
34 Wing Farm Parkway  
Bath, ME 04530  
207-442-7963

Joe Everett, President and CEO  
The Opportunity Alliance  
50 Lydia Lane  
South Portland, ME 04106  
207-523-5055

Kara Hay, President and CEO  
Penguins  
PO Box 1162  
Bangor, ME 04402  
207-973-3500

Donna Kelley, President and CEO  
Waldo Community Action Partners

9 Field Street  
Belfast, ME 04915  
207-338-6809

Noelle Coyne, CEO  
Western Maine Community Action,  
Inc.  
PO Box 200  
East Wilton, ME 04234-0200  
207-743-7763

Carter Friend, CEO  
York County Community Action  
Corporation  
PO Box 72  
Sanford, ME 04073  
207-324-5762

February 5<sup>th</sup>, 2026

Re: Testimony in Support of LD 2064 – An Act to Expand Access to Early Childhood Nutrition by Establishing a Grant Program for Public Preschools

To: Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs  
Senator Rafferty, Representative Murphy, and Honorable Members of the Health and Human Services Committee

On behalf of the Maine Community Action Partnership (MeCAP) and the Community Action Agencies serving all sixteen counties, I write in strong support of LD 2064, An Act to Expand Access to Early Childhood Nutrition by Establishing a Grant Program for Public Preschools. This legislation is essential to ensuring that all children enrolled in public pre-K programs, regardless of setting or location, have equitable access to nutritious meals.

Currently, due to restrictions within federal child nutrition programs, community-based public pre-K classrooms are ineligible to participate in the universal school meal program. As a result, many providers operating outside school facilities face high costs to supply daily meals. LD 2064 addresses this critical gap by establishing a grant program that enables community-based programs to provide breakfast, lunch, and a snack for every enrolled child.

The bill also reinforces Maine's commitment to a mixed-delivery model for public pre-K by ensuring that community partners, who are essential to reaching rural areas and communities without school-administered pre-K, have the resources needed to meet state standards. Without this support, providers are forced to absorb substantial meal-related costs, which can lead to financial strain, reduced meal quality, and, ultimately, negative impacts on children and families who depend on these services.

Importantly, LD 2064 also establishes infrastructure grants to help programs build the capacity needed to prepare meals and manage nutrition services effectively. These supports are crucial for community-based providers, who shoulder responsibility for meal preparation and distribution without access to the purchasing power or facilities available in school-based programs.

Passage of LD 2064 offers a practical, state-level solution to a clearly identified federal funding gap and ensures that all Maine children in public pre-K have access to the high-quality nutrition they need to learn and thrive. We respectfully urge the Committee to advance LD 2064 in support of equitable, high-quality public pre-K for every child in Maine, regardless of income or geographic location.

Thank you for your consideration,

*Victoria D. Forkus*

**Victoria Forkus**  
Managing Director  
Maine Community Action Partnership (MeCAP)  
(M) 207-441-6657