

Betsy Sweet  
HALLOWELL  
LD 2212

Senator Rotundo, Rep. Gattine, Senator Grohowski, Rep. Sayre and the members of the committees

My name is Betsy Sweet from Hallowell and principle of Moose Ridge Associates. Today I am here on behalf of not only my current clients, but I feel like on behalf of all the clients I have represented for the last 44 years - `children, poor families, low wage workers, people desperate for mental health services, food, health care, heating and housing assistance.

I have come here every year on their behalf imploring this committee and this legislature, to help with things you all care about, know are good long-term investments, cheaper in the long run... and every. Year there is not enough money to do all the right things.

But it is not true. And at this moment every constituent of yours and the vulnerable Mainers my clients serve feel this truth in their bones.

When I first testified before this committee in 1983 there were 13 billionaires in the US

Today there are over 900

In the last 20 years 79 TRILLION dollars have been shifted from the bottom 90% to the top 1%.

According to the Rand Corp.in 2023 alone 39 Trillion was shifted from the bottom 90% to the top 1%.

If income distribution had remained the same, the Maine median income would be DOUBLE what it is today. It would answer the affordability crisis.

And we all feel it and know it. And every poll reflects that people are ready and even desperate for law makers at every level to take bold action.

Because where we are is due to policy. Not some inevitable drift over which we have no control.

Your committees, this legislature, this Executive, can't fix it all – but you can fix some.

As community leaders and respected influencers you/we can stay the real thing and help Maine people understand and trust their gut about what is really happening – we can provide the true economic context.

Immediately, you can enact 2 bills already in front of this legislature now – Rep. Matlack's tax bracket bill – LD 229. And Rep. Goleck's LD 1089 fair share tax on those making over 1 million dollars.

Failure to do so does not meet the moment we are in – where economic insecurity is a reality for most Mainers – and where the wealthiest continue to benefit. And, it keeps us pointing at each other from the right and left when the only direction we should all be pointing which is up.

Thank you.  
Betsy Sweet