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To Senator Rafferty, Representative Murphy, and Distinguished Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs,

As the Director of Special Services for the Gorham School District, I am writing **in support** of LD 2175: Resolve, Regarding Legislative Review of Portions of Chapter 115: The Credentialing of Education Personnel, a Major Substantive Rule of the Department of Education, State Board of Education.

With the transition of the FAPE service duty for children under Part B, Section 619 to local school administrative units, there is now a critical need for special education teachers to hold endorsement within the 3-5 age group in order to provide mandated services to children with disabilities.

This revision appropriately recognizes that:

- School districts are now, or will be by July 1, 2028, directly responsible for ensuring FAPE for preschool-aged children with disabilities.
- Special education teachers must be credentialed to serve this age span.
- Early specialized instruction and intervention delivered through individualized education programs (IEPs) in early childhood settings promote foundational skill development and help prevent widening achievement gaps in later grades.

Without this expansion, Maine children with disabilities under Part B, Section 619 risk not receiving mandated special education services—despite the presence of qualified and certified special education teachers ready to provide these essential supports.

I provide strong support for the renewal option allowing current 282 certificate holders to renew under the revised age/grade span and support the additional pathways, as well as revisions that eliminate confusing language.

I would like to thank the Maine State Board of Education for their thoughtful work and dedication in updating Chapter 115 and urge the Committee to vote to “ought to pass” on this piece of legislation.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

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