

Testimony from Reid Hansen
Windham
Current Student at Washington County Community College

In support of the Maine Community College System's portion of LD 2212
An Act Making Supplemental Appropriations and Allocations from the General Fund and Other
Funds for the Expenditures of State Government and Changing Certain Provisions of the Law
Necessary to the Proper Operations of State Government for the Fiscal Years Ending June 30,
2026 and June 30, 2027. Part A, page 17 and Language QQQ

Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs
Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs

February 24, 2026

Senator Rotundo, Senator Rafferty, Representative Gattine, Representative Murphy, and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs and the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs, my name is Reid Hansen. I am from Windham, Maine, and I am a student in the Diesel and Automotive Engine Overhaul Program at Washington County Community College. I am here to testify in support of continuing the Maine Free College program.

If free tuition had not been available to me, I would not have even considered coming to college. The cost would have been too much of a barrier. Instead, I likely would have gone straight to work and missed out on the education and opportunities I have now.

Because of Free College, I have been able to save money and focus fully on my classes. I do not have to work during the week while I am attending school, which has freed up time for me to concentrate on my coursework and make sure I am passing my classes. That kind of focus would not have been possible if I had to balance full-time work with school.

Free College has also helped build my confidence as a student. I came into the Automotive Program with some prior knowledge of automotive work, but being here has reinforced and strengthened that knowledge. The hands-on training and classroom instruction have expanded my skills and shown me what I am capable of achieving. I graduated with my certificate in Automotive Technology on May 16, 2025 thanks to the Maine Free College scholarship and am currently enrolled in the Diesel and Automotive Engine Overhaul program.

One opportunity that really stood out to me was participating in GM STEP training during my time in the Automotive Program. Before that experience, I did not think I would be interested in working at a dealership. Through that training, I realized that I have the option to pursue employment at a larger dealership if I choose to. It opened doors that I did not even know were available to me.

Free College has given me the time, focus, and confidence to succeed. It has allowed me to fully commit to my education and to take advantage of opportunities that prepare me for a strong career in Maine. I respectfully ask you to continue supporting the Maine Free College program so that other students can have the same opportunity to pursue their education and build their futures.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Reid Hansen", written in a cursive style.

Reid Hansen
Diesel and Automotive Overhaul
Program Student
Automotive Program Graduate
Washington County Community College