

Heather Perry  
Gorham ME  
LD 2175

February 24, 2026

Re: Support for LD 2175 – Resolve, Regarding Legislative Review of Portions of Chapter 115: The Credentialing of Education Personnel

Senator Rafferty, Representative Murphy, and Honorable Members of the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee:

I write in strong support of LD 2175 and the thoughtful revisions to Chapter 115 before you. While no legislation of this complexity is perfect, LD 2175 represents meaningful progress toward strengthening Maine’s educator credentialing system while maintaining rigor, quality, and accountability. After more than 18 months of open, transparent collaboration involving educators, higher education, professional associations, and policymakers, this work reflects broad input from across Maine’s education community. The strong support from organizations such as MSSA, MPA, MEA, MEPRI, MCLA, and MACTE underscores the importance of moving forward. LD 2175 addresses one of the most pressing challenges facing Maine’s public schools: workforce shortages. Across the state—and in Gorham—we have struggled to fill critical positions in special education, advanced mathematics, world languages and more. In many cases, we have highly qualified individuals who live in our community, have demonstrated their ability as substitute teachers, and are deeply committed to serving our students. However, the current certification process often requires significant additional coursework, time, and financial sacrifice that creates barriers for otherwise outstanding candidates. As a result, we lose talented individuals who would be exceptional educators in our classrooms.

LD 2175 provides a solution by creating rigorous, portfolio-based certification pathways that maintain strong state oversight while allowing districts to support candidates through targeted professional learning, mentoring, and demonstrated competency. These pathways do not replace traditional teacher preparation programs, which will remain the primary route into the profession. Instead, they complement existing pathways by creating structured opportunities for career changers and experienced educators seeking new endorsements—individuals who bring valuable expertise, lived experience, and commitment to Maine’s students.

At a time when public schools face increasing student needs, expanding program requirements, and ongoing workforce shortages, LD 2175 represents a thoughtful, responsible step forward. It allows districts to invest in people already committed to our communities while ensuring the highest standards of preparation and support. Most importantly, it helps ensure that every student in Maine has access to a highly qualified, well-prepared educator.

I respectfully urge you to support LD 2175. This legislation strengthens our certification system. It maintains rigor, expands opportunity, and addresses one of the most significant barriers facing our public schools today. By approving LD 2175, you will help ensure that Maine schools can recruit, develop, and retain the talented educators our students deserve, both now and into the future.

Respectfully submitted,

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Superintendent of Schools