

Testimony Neither for nor Against Portions 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

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Good afternoon, Senator Rotundo and Representative Gattine, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs. My name is James Myall; I'm a policy analyst at the Maine Center for Economic Policy I'm here to testify neither for nor against portions of the Governor's supplemental budget proposal, LD 2212. While MECEP appreciates the Governor's focus on affordability, we believe that there are better ways to address this than the one-time \$300 payments.

There are certainly some struggling Mainers for whom a \$300 payment would make a real difference, allowing them to put food on the table, catch up on rent, or pay for an unexpected car repair. However, this group of people only makes up a fraction of the more than 700,000 people that the Governor proposes sending money to. In other words, the proposal is not well-targeted to the people who need it most.

What's more, the cost of living is not a one-time problem, and the legislature should be looking for ongoing solutions rather than temporary fixes. There are existing programs in place that could be expanded to provide this ongoing assistance with everyday costs:

- The sales tax fairness and property tax fairness credits would put extra cash in Mainers' pockets when they file their taxes.
- Replacing lost federal premium tax credits would help Mainers afford health care.
- Reversing federal cuts to MaineCare and SNAP would help Mainers get medical assistance put food on the table.
- Renewing the Eviction Prevention Program would keep Mainers in their homes.
- Supplementing the wages of child and adult care workers would help those workers make ends meet and help Mainers afford care for their loved ones.

Ongoing efforts to reduce costs for Mainers will require ongoing revenue, paid for by people who aren't worrying about how to make rent this month or whether they can afford to see the doctor. The legislature is in possession of several bills that would increase



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taxes on wealthy Mainers and large corporations, and MECEP urges you to include those in the supplemental budget to fund programs to help the most vulnerable Mainers.

In order to truly tackle affordability for Mainers, MECEP urges you to adopt solutions that are well-targeted, ongoing, and sustainably funded through taxing the wealthy and making our tax code more fair.

Thank you and I'll be happy to take any questions.