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Maine Mayors Coalition Testimony on LD 2226 An Act to Amend the Essential Programs and Services School Funding Formula

Senator Rafferty, Representative Murphy and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs, the Maine Mayors Coalition is providing testimony in support of LD 2226, An Act to Amend the Essential Programs and Services School Funding Formula.

The Maine Mayors Coalition is a nonpartisan group representing the mayors of eleven Maine communities – Auburn, Bangor, Biddeford, Lewiston, Portland, Rockland, Saco, Sanford, South Portland, Waterville and Westbrook – and nearly 300,000 residents. The Coalition advocates on behalf of our citizens and municipalities for policies that recognize the vital services Maine cities provide and the positive impact Maine cities have on our state. The Coalition seeks to work in partnership with state and federal elected officials to meet the needs of Maine people.

Maine's children are our state's greatest legacy. Providing them with a quality education that prepares them for the future is one of the most important investments our cities and state can make.

Our Coalition partners' school districts strive to provide all students with a level playing field so they have the opportunity to realize their full potential and become contributing members of society.

Unfortunately, Maine's Essential Programs and Services funding formula does not support a level playing field. Instead, the formula tips in favor of students who live in communities that are able and willing to contribute additional funds to their own school districts.

LD 2226 offers significant changes to the EPS formula that would distribute the state's 55 percent of education funding more equitably. The bill would update the formula to accurately reflect the realities that Maine's school districts face every day and more fairly distribute education funding across the state. At the same time, it could help stabilize ever-increasing school budgets and rising tax burdens placed on property taxpayers.

We respectfully urge you to support LD 2226 for Maine's students, taxpayers and the future of our state.

Thank you for your consideration.