



Joseph E. Rafferty
Senator, District 34

THE MAINE SENATE
131st Legislature

3 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333

Testimony of Senator Joe Rafferty Presenting
LD 335, An Act to Improve Educator Certification Response Times
Before the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs

Tuesday, March 28, 2023

Representative Brennan and distinguished members of the Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs, my name is Joe Rafferty and I proudly represent the people of Senate District 34 including Berwick, North Berwick, Wells, Kennebunk and Kennebunkport.

I'm here today as the sponsor of **LD 335, "An Act to Improve Educator Certification Response Times."**

As it is currently written, this bill establishes 5 Education Specialist III positions within the Department of Education in order to increase response times for educator certification and to provide oversight of the certification process effective October 1, 2023. These positions should speed up response times which in turn has the potential to attract and maintain more qualified educators. I still hear from educators that the certification process is slow which I feel may result in our losing quality staff to other New England States. Furthermore, fewer certified staff may create larger class sizes and give individual students less attention.

I have heard some talk of amendments to this bill as it pertains to the total number of staff needed in DOE to do the job. That will come in the form of an amendment.

I'm happy to answer any questions I can at this time and would ask that you direct questions relative to the number of positions needed and job specifics to those coming in behind me.

Thank you,

Joe Rafferty
Senate District 34