

State of Maine

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Testimony of Michael Perry, Acting Director of the Office of Higher Education and Educator Support

In Support of: L.D. 753

An Act to Allow Retired Teachers and Educational Technicians to Be Recertified

Before the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs

Sponsored by: Senator Rafferty

Co-sponsored by: President Jackson

Date: March 28, 2023

Senator Rafferty, Representative Brennan, and Distinguished Members of the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee:

My name is Michel Perry, and I serve as the Acting Director of the Office of Higher Education and Educator Support Services, which includes the certification team. I am here today to speak on behalf of the Department of Education in support of LD 753, An Act to Allow Retired Teachers and Educational Technicians to Be Recertified. This bill proposes that a retired teacher or educational technician could be eligible to receive renewed certification after lapse.

As you are all aware, the Maine education community continues to struggle with an educator workforce shortage. Creating a pathway for retired teachers to more easily return to the classroom could offer some immediate relief to the field as we continue to strengthen the educator workforce. Our retired teachers are a valuable resource to our education field, and we support the flexibility this bill provides for bringing them back into the classroom.

The Department has two suggestions for this bill. First, we hope the Committee will consider adding the condition that the retired teacher had been in good standing prior to retirement. Second, we hope the Committee will consider reducing the time of lapsed certification to 5 years rather than 10 years, recognizing that the classrooms of today are significantly different than those of 10 years ago.

The Department supports LD 753, An Act to Allow Retired Teachers and Educational Technicians to Be Recertified with the suggested changes and we will be available to provide additional information on LD 753 during the upcoming work session.