

Legislative Document #1096

An Act to Help Retired Teachers and State Employees Keep Pace with Inflation by Matching the Cost-of-living Adjustment for Social Security Benefits

My name is Janet Ecker. I live in Brewer, Maine. I taught in the State of Maine for 42 years – first in Special Education and then in Grades 4 & 5. I retired in Spring of 2019. Those were wonderful years and I would not trade them for anything.

My husband worked as a forester for what is now the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry for 41 years. He retired in the Summer of 2018. He definitely enjoyed his time helping to oversee one of Maine's most precious resources.

Passage of the bill in question would have a positive effect on our family and the families of the many retired teachers and state employees who have given much to our state. As you know, as things stand currently, retired teachers and state employees receive cost of living raises only on a portion of our retirement benefit and those raises are capped at 3% no matter what the rate of inflation is. Keeping the cost of living raises capped at 3% potentially reduces our retirement benefit as we have less and less buying power if inflation passes 3 percent making it more difficult for us to meet our basic needs. Passing this bill would be a positive step in helping those of us who have spent much of their lives working toward maintaining and improving life in the State of Maine. Passage of the bill will also make a statement to much needed current and future teachers and state employees that state of Maine values those who invest their lives in working for the citizens of this state.

Thank you for your hard work on behalf of the people of the State of Maine.

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