



Henry L. Ingwersen  
Senator, District 32

THE MAINE SENATE  
131st Legislature

3 State House Station  
Augusta, Maine 04333

*Testimony of Senator Henry Ingwersen Presenting*  
**LD 1185, An Act to Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue to Recapitalize the  
School Revolving Renovation Fund**  
*Before the Senate Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs*

Wednesday, April 26, 2023

Senator Rotundo, Representative Sachs and esteemed members of the Appropriations and Financial Affairs Committee. I'm Senator Henry Ingwersen, and I represent District 32, which includes the York County municipalities of Arundel, Biddeford, Dayton, Hollis, and Lyman. I'm before you today to introduce and speak in favor of my bill LD 1185, "An Act to Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue to Recapitalize the School Revolving Renovation Fund."

This bill proposes to increase funding for the School Revolving Renovation Fund (SRRF) through a bond. I believe that this bill represents a crucial investment in the future of our state's education system.

Many of Maine's schools are old, and are often in dire need of renovation. Of the 600+ Maine Public School buildings, more than half were built during or before the 1960s. The pandemic has further exposed the inadequacies and deficiencies in our school infrastructure, especially when it comes to ensuring basic health and safety for students and staff. Many schools lack proper ventilation systems, adequate lighting, and secure entrances, among other issues.

This is where the School Revolving Renovation Fund comes in. It has already proven to be a vital resource for schools across the state, helping to fund critical infrastructure improvements and upgrades. However, the demand for these funds far outstrips the supply. Maine DOE estimated the total dollar amount for projects that requested funds from School Revolving Renovation Fund in 2020 was \$50,466,107 and of that, \$25,233,474 was approved. In 2022, of the \$60,627,356 requested only \$39,151,515 was fulfilled. And again, this year's total dollar amount requested was \$65,269,251 and only \$15,406,659 was fulfilled. That means over the last three years that around 45% of the need has been met by the School Revolving Renovation Fund, and the need continues grow faster than the fund is being replenished. As a result, many schools are forced to wait years for funding, and some are simply unable to secure the funds they need. Just last year, only 34 out of 87 applications for renovations were fulfilled by this fund.

It is also important to note that the SRRF has the following priorities:

- Priority 1: Health, safety and compliance issues, including roof structural upgrades; improvements to indoor air quality; compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act; hazardous material abatement or removal; and other health, safety and compliance issues
- Priority 2: Repairs and improvements not related to health, safety and compliance limited to repairs and improvements to school building structures, windows, doors and water supply or waste disposal systems.



Henry L. Ingwersen  
Senator, District 32

**THE MAINE SENATE**  
131st Legislature

3 State House Station  
Augusta, Maine 04333

- Priority 3: Repairs and improvements related to energy and water conservation
- Priority 4: Upgrades of learning spaces
- Priority 5: Other projects

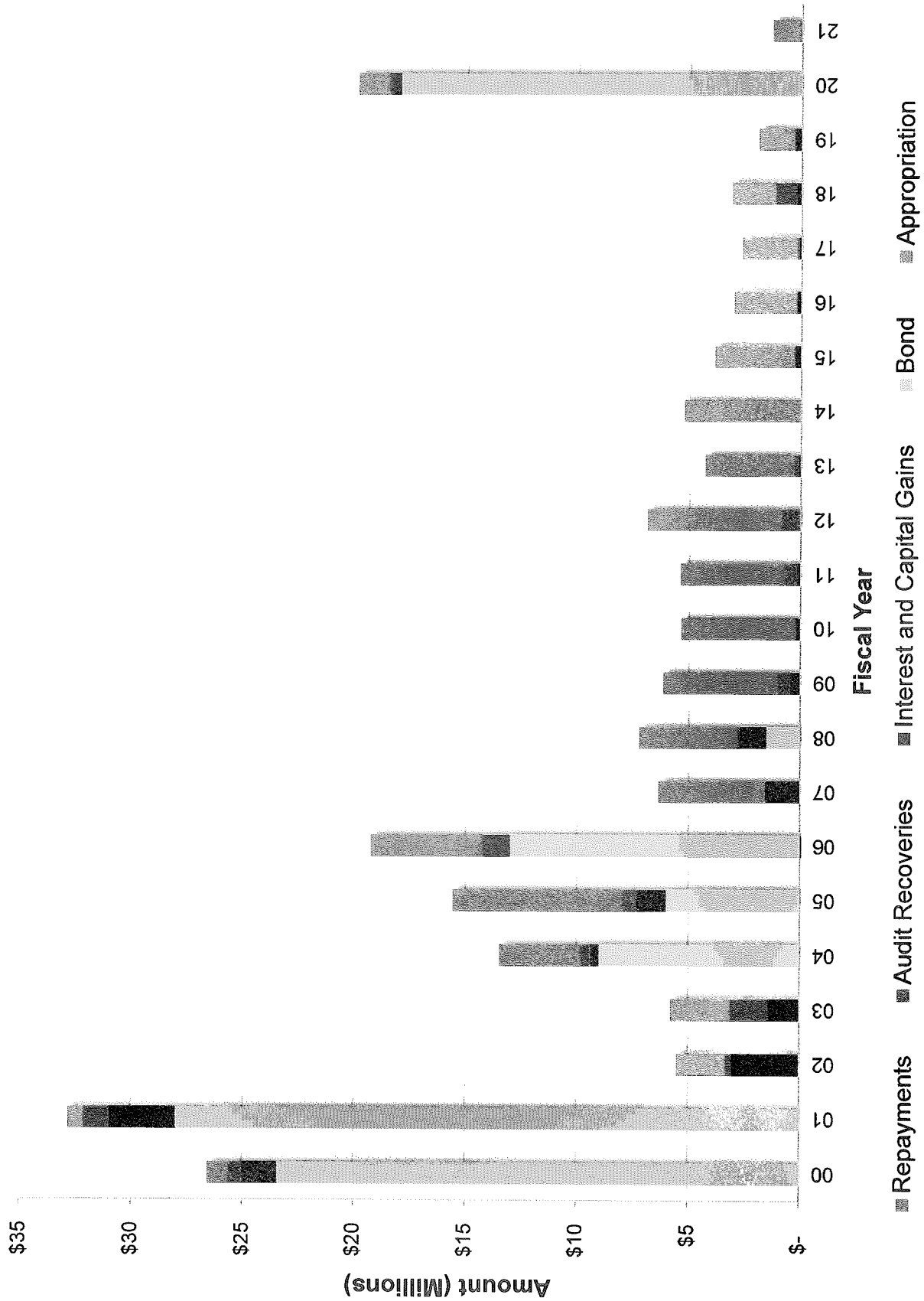
The problem is that the SRRF has only been able to address Priority 1 issues because of the lack of funding. As superintendents from schools in my district had informed me, and will testify on, is that the remaining priorities are left to be funded by local taxpayers. In my opinion, this fund should be able to do more than address just one of its five priorities, and we have an opportunity to address that here.

That is why I urge you to support this bill, which will increase funding for the School Revolving Renovation Fund through a bond. By doing so, we can ensure that our schools have the resources they need to make the necessary upgrades and repairs to keep our students and staff safe and healthy.

I also urge you to consider the specific needs of schools in the areas that you represent as well. Our schools each face unique challenges that require targeted support, and I am confident that increased funding for the School Revolving Renovation Fund can make a real difference in their ability to provide a safe and supportive learning environment for their students.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I strongly encourage you to support this bill and invest in the future of Maine's education system. I am happy to take any questions you might have.

# SRRF Revenues



# Construction of Active Maine Schools by Decade

## -Original Construction

