

TESTIMONY OF ANNE SEDLACK  
ON BEHALF OF MAINE INDEPENDENT COLLEGES ASSOCIATION  
BEFORE THE COMMITTEE ON TAXATION

**In of Neither for Nor Against of LD 1718, An Act to Encourage Participation in Maine's  
Essential Support Workforce Through Access to Higher Education**

**Committee on Innovation, Development, Economic Advancement and Business  
May 2, 2023**

Senator Curry, Representative Roberts, and members of the Innovation, Development, Economic Advancement and Business Committee, my name Anne Sedlack, and I am an attorney with Preti Flaherty, and I am here today on behalf of the Maine Independent Colleges Association (MICA) to testify Neither for Nor Against LD 1718.

MICA represents 11 private, nonprofit colleges and universities<sup>1</sup> throughout Maine that serve over 25,000 students, over 7,000 of whom are from Maine. These institutions are located in municipalities of all sizes across the State, from Maine's largest city to small tourist towns and farming communities. Collectively, the 11 institutions are an economic force and an integral part of Maine's Higher Educational eco-system. While they share the attributes of being private and nonprofit, these institutions are highly diverse and serve very different aspects of the educational needs of Maine people. Together they:

- Employ over 6,000 Maine workers.
- Have a total payroll in excess of \$340 million.
- Have direct expenditures of over \$615 million.
- Have an estimated economic impact on Maine's economy of over a billion dollars each year.
- Directly contribute close to \$2M to municipalities.
- Value of community service is over \$24 million.
- Provide nearly \$55 million in financial aid to Maine students.
- Draw nearly 300,000 visitors to our state each year

MICA is testifying Neither for Nor Against LD 1718 because we believe that this is a creative and innovate idea to solving the essential workforce shortage crisis; however, we want to encourage the Committee to consider adding all colleges and universities in this State.

The Association believe that the State has and should continue to fund a robust public school system because University of Maine System, Maine Community College System and Maine Maritime Academy are a valuable piece of our community. However, we believe that if the State

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<sup>1</sup> Bates College, Bowdoin College, Colby College, College of the Atlantic, Husson University, Maine College of Art, Roux Institute at Northeastern University, St. Joseph's College of Maine, Thomas College, Unity College, and University of New England.

is giving vouchers to attend schools, then those vouchers should be used to attend any of the colleges and universities in the State. We think that allowing the essential worker or family of essential worker to choose where they receive their higher education would make this a much more valuable program.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit these comments, and we look forward to working with the Committee. Please support LD 1718. Thank you.

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