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TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF

L.D. 1773

AN ACT TO INCREASE THE STATE'S SHARE OF THE COST OF HEALTH INSURANCE FOR RETIRED TEACHERS

Senator Rafferty, Representative Brennan and members of the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee. I am Steven Bailey, executive director of Maine School Management Association, testifying on behalf of the legislative committees of the Maine School Boards Association and Maine School Superintendents Association, in support of L.D. 1773.

Increasing the state share of health insurance for retired teachers is imperative. After giving 30 plus years of service to the children of our state, our retired teachers should continue to receive support towards their health insurance that keeps up with the increases in the costs of health insurance.

In 2022, retired teachers received a cost-of-living increase of 3% on a base of \$24,911 which meant an increase of \$60.47 a month, before taxes. Due to the structure of how retirement benefits are calculated for retired teachers, if the state does not keep pace with the increases in health insurance, our teachers will see a reduction in their monthly take home pay. This simply is not acceptable.

To continue to honor Maine's retired educators we urge you to pass L.D. 1773.