



Cameron Reny
Senator, District 13

THE MAINE SENATE
131st Legislature

3 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333

Testimony of Senator Cameron Reny
**Supporting LD 1799, "An Act to Expand Maine's High-quality Early Learning
and Care for Children by Increasing Public Preschool Opportunities in
Communities"**

*Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs
May 10, 2023*

Senator Rafferty, Representative Brennan, and honorable members of the Joint Standing Committee On Education and Cultural Affairs, I am Senator Cameron Reny, and I represent Senate District 13, which includes most of Lincoln County and the towns of Washington and Windsor I am here today to testify in strong support of LD 1799, "An Act to Expand Maine's High-quality Early Learning and Care for Children by Increasing Public Preschool Opportunities in Communities "

First, I want to thank Senator Vitelli for sponsoring this bill As a mother and a school counselor, I have had the privilege of observing firsthand the impact that exceptional early education can have on the lives of our children The experiences and knowledge they gain during these formative years set the stage for their future development and achievements In my career as a public educator, I have worked with kindergarteners for years The difference between a young student who attended a preschool program versus a student who did not attend a preschool program is obvious and substantial

I cannot overemphasize the value of public pre-K as a critical stepping stone for our children's later educational journey Early childhood is a vital period for acquiring fundamental skills Access to quality pre-K education plays an important role in developing these skills, fostering a love for learning, and narrowing the gap between children from diverse socio-economic backgrounds

Speaking of narrowing the gap between children from diverse socio-economic backgrounds, publicly available pre-K can help parents who are unable to pay for early childcare return to the workforce a year earlier

By broadening the availability of public pre-K opportunities through child care centers, family child care, and Head Start programs, we not only secure stable funding for these indispensable services but also support working families by offering comprehensive care A diverse pre-K delivery system encompassing public schools, child care centers, family child care, and Head Start programs will best cater to the needs of our children, families, and communities in Maine



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In closing, I strongly urge you to support LD 1799, as it represents a critical investment in the well-being and future of our children, families, and communities throughout Maine. This bill lays the groundwork for an inclusive and equitable public preschool system, providing universal access for all children and families.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I'm happy to answer any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cameron Reny".

Cameron Reny
State Senator, District 13
Representing Lincoln County and the towns of Washington and Windsor