

Testimony Neither for nor Against LD 258, part HHHHH

Honorable Senator Rotundo, Representative Sachs and other esteemed members of the Appropriations and Financial Affairs Committee,

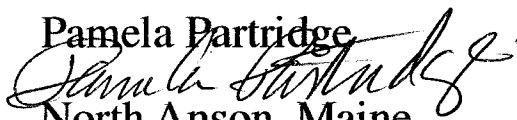
My name is Pamela Partridge and I live in North Anson. I returned to college as a non traditional student in my mid thirties to become a certified classroom teacher and retired after 25 years of teaching. In those 25 years I taught adult education, middle level science, and the upper elementary grades.

I am also the current President of SEAR, the Somerset Education Association Retired.

I am here today to testify neither for nor against the Governor's proposed change package to LD 258, specifically related to part HHHHH of the proposal, a one-time ad hoc COLA of 3% for retirees. Last year we received a COLA bump, and I heard members of SEAR say they appreciated receiving the additional dollars, but they need a long term solution. Our members, particularly our older members with smaller pensions, feel this has been going on for too long. The lack of a sufficient COLA has caused them stress in their ability to pay their bills.

This proposal is a life line with a time limit. It would help meet current monthly costs that have blown up this past year due to inflation, but it doesn't stop the snowballing gap between our monthly income and the cost of living. Again, there needs to be a more permanent solution to the COLA problem so that we have reliable, consistent protection from inflation, and not the growing erosion to our ability to pay our bills.

Thank you for your time and for all you do for the people of the great state of Maine.

Pamela Partridge

North Anson, Maine