

Good morning, Senator Rafferty, Representative Brennan, and members of the committee on Education and Cultural Affairs, my name is Haley Taranko, I'm a Maine School of Science and Mathematics alumni, a civil servant, and this fall I will be starting at the University of Maine School of Law. I am here to offer my support for LD 2118.

Attending the Maine School of Science and Mathematics was a life changing decision for me. While attending my previous high school I had grown bored and convinced myself that the only solution would be a drastic change of scenery. When I first arrived at MSSM, every single college I intended to apply to after graduation was in California. However, while attending MSSM I felt a new sense of pride, of belonging in Maine, and I was in awe of the gifted group of young people from around the state that I had become a part of.

MSSM gave me the most incredible and well-rounded high school experience. I, of course, got to participate in science experiments and hone my math skills. But I also broke personal records in track, I regularly had life changing epiphanies in my English classrooms, I forged strong friendships, I even learned to Tango. The virtue of MSSM is that it allows these gifted and inquisitive children like me to step out of their boredom and says "What do you want to learn? What do you want to see? What do you want to do? Just tell us and we will support you in every way we can" and I strongly support LD 2118 as it will give MSSM more resources to support its students in every way possible.

Haley Taranko