

Testimony of Kathryn McIntyre

In Opposition to

Part CCCC of

LD 210, An Act Making Unified Appropriations and Allocations from the General Fund and Other Funds for the Expenditures of State Government and Changing Certain Provisions of the Law Necessary to the Proper Operations of State Government for the Fiscal Years Ending June 30, 2025, June 30, 2026 and June 30, 2027

Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs

Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs

February 7, 2025

Senator Rotundo, Representative Gattine, and Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs, and Senator Rafferty, Representative Murphy, and Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs,

My name is Kathryn McIntyre, and I represent (*or I am a student at*) Thomas College. I testify today in strong opposition to Part CCCC of LD 210 (the Biennial Budget).

Part CCCC limits the use of the Maine State Grant Program to students attending Maine institutions of public higher education, thereby excluding the long time use of the Maine State Grant by Maine students wanting to attend one of Maine's independent colleges or universities.

This program has been a crucial part of my ability to afford higher education, and I am deeply concerned about the proposal to remove funding for students attending private institutions like mine. This issue is personal to me because the **Maine State Grant was a major factor in my decision to stay in Maine for college**. Without it, I might have looked elsewhere for my education, but this financial support gave me the confidence to continue my studies here—right in my home state.

I am paying for my own college education, and every dollar matters. Each year, I receive \$2,500 through this grant—money that helps cover tuition, books, and other expenses. Without this support, students like me, who are working hard to afford college on our own, would face even greater financial strain. Losing this funding would not only make it harder for current students to continue their education but could also discourage future students from choosing Maine colleges altogether.

More importantly, this support is not just an investment in my education; it's an investment in Maine's future. As a future educator, I am committed to giving back to the state by teaching and shaping the next generation of Maine students. If this funding is taken away from private college

students, it will create unnecessary barriers for many who, like me, **chose to stay in Maine because of this support.**

I urge you to **keep the Maine State Grant Program accessible to students at private colleges like Thomas College.** By doing so, you are supporting the future teachers, nurses, social workers, and leaders who will stay in Maine and contribute to our state's success.

Maine needs young professionals who are willing to stay, learn, and work here. The Maine State Grant is not just financial aid—it's a commitment to keeping talent in Maine and investing in students who will shape the next generation of our state.

Thank you for your time and for your dedication to Maine's students and future.

Thank you for your consideration, and I strongly urge you to vote to remove Part CCCC from the Biennial Budget.