

Senator Rafferty, Representative Murphy and other members of the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee,

My name is Maggie Burgos, I work at Lincoln Middle School as a Social Studies teacher and I live in Portland. I am here today to testify in support of LD 34, An Act to Increase the Minimum Salary for Teachers.

I have lived in Maine since 2013 and worked in Maine's public schools since 2018. My experiences in Maine's schools have ranged from one-halfway rural schools in Washington County to working in buildings with over 400 students. I believe strongly in the potential of Maine's public schools but I am increasingly worried that our students and communities will continue to suffer due to the teacher shortage in our state. Our state is not a competitive market for educators. Our state does not offer straight-forward and supportive paths into this profession. Every year I have watched talented educators leave the profession or leave our state because they did not see a future where they could continue to support themselves or their families as an educator in Maine. That is a disgrace. If you believe in the value of public schools then you must do everything in your power to keep talented educators in our state. Vote to raise the minimum salary for teachers. Thank you.