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Testimony of Representative Marshall Archer presenting
**LD 193, An Act to Fund Students in Maine Schools Who Are Experiencing
Homelessness**
Before the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee

Good afternoon, Sen. Rafferty, Rep. Murphy and members of the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee. My name is Marshall Archer, and I represent House District 129, which is part of Saco.

Thank you for being here today to discuss an issue that strikes at the core of our commitment to equity in education, ensuring that students experiencing homelessness receive the support they need to thrive in Maine's schools.

Today, I am proud to introduce **LD 193, An Act to Fund Students in Maine Schools Who Are Experiencing Homelessness**, a bill that will provide dedicated funding using Maine's Essential Programs and Services (EPS) formula to better support our most vulnerable students.

Across our state, students experiencing homelessness face overwhelming barriers to success. From lacking stable housing to struggling with food insecurity and transportation, these students are at greater risk of falling behind academically and disengaging from their education altogether. According to recent data, thousands of Maine students face housing instability each year. This is not just an education issue—it is a community crisis.

Yet, despite the clear need, our current school funding formula does not adequately account for the unique challenges these students face. Schools and districts must stretch limited resources to meet their needs, often at the expense of other essential services. We must do better.

This solution is simple and effective: we will integrate a dedicated funding weight within the EPS formula to provide schools with the necessary resources to support homeless students.

The EPS formula is the backbone of Maine's school funding system, ensuring that each district receives the support it needs based on student enrollment and specific educational needs.

This bill proposes an additional per-pupil weight for students identified as experiencing homelessness, similar to the existing adjustments for economically disadvantaged students and those requiring special education services.

By incorporating this targeted funding into the EPS formula, we are making a clear statement: every child, regardless of their housing situation, deserves an equal chance at educational success. This is not just about numbers on a spreadsheet—it's about real students, real futures and real opportunities.

When we invest in these students, we invest in Maine's future. We empower young people to break cycles of poverty and instability, helping them graduate, pursue higher education or vocational training and contribute meaningfully to our communities.

Together, we can ensure that no student in Maine is left behind simply because they lack a permanent address. Together, we can reaffirm our commitment to fairness, opportunity and the fundamental belief that every child deserves a quality education.

Thank you for your time today. I would be happy to answer any questions you have for me.