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Testimony of Debra McIntyre, Executive Director, on behalf of the members of the Maine Curriculum Leaders Association, testifying in opposition to LD 78 An Act to Require Elementary School Students to Learn Cursive Writing.

Senator Rafferty, Representative Murphy, and members of the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee, my name is Debra McIntyre, and I am the Executive Director of the Maine Curriculum Leaders Association. On behalf of the members of MCLA, I am testifying in opposition to LD 78 An Act to Require Elementary School Students to Learn Cursive Writing.

This bill is proposing that cursive writing be included in the Maine Learning Results. Currently there is no requirement in the English Language Arts Standards that require cursive writing. We believe that by requiring additional standards around cursive writing, this would take away valuable time that is needed to address the essential literacy skills to support all students in becoming proficient readers, writers and communicators. Mandating cursive writing in classrooms will require additional time for teachers to plan lessons, assessments, and practice materials. This additional requirement will lead to pressure on already stretched school schedules, potentially taking away valuable instructional time.

Cursive writing is not an essential skill in today's world. While MCLA understands the desire to preserve traditions like cursive writing, we believe that the imposition of this requirement is not in the best interest of Maine's students. Instead, we encourage the committee to prioritize policies that offer students the flexibility to learn skills that will truly serve them in an increasingly digital and interconnected world.

For these reasons MCLA encourages the committee to vote Ought Not to Pass. Thank you for your time.