



Maine Curriculum Leaders Association

*Championing Policies And Practices That Enhance Teaching And Learning*

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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 543 An Act to Enhance Maine's Wildlife Conservation Efforts and Preserve Sporting Heritage by Requiring Hunter Safety Education in Schools.**

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 offer testimony in opposition to LD 543 An Act to Enhance Maine's Wildlife Conservation Efforts and Preserve Sporting Heritage by Requiring Hunter Safety Education in Schools.

A firearms hunter safety course is a valuable course and legally required for any student who chooses to hunt. This course requires a trained, certified instructor that meets state and international standards. The course requires a 3-hour session of classroom instruction, completing a workbook and attending an 8-hour skill and exam session and successfully earning a passing score on the exam. In addition, if students are under the age of 16, they must be accompanied by a parent at the training sessions.

Based on this information, we cannot support this proposal in any way. For those students who want to hunt, it is already in state statute that they must take a hunter safety course, but this does not fall under the realm of public schools. The Maine Learning Results continue to drive the essential instruction that schools must provide to all students and the components of a hunter safety course are not in alignment with the MLR's.

We also believe that this would yet be another unfunded mandate for all schools with many questions to answer. Who would teach this course? Would public school staff be required to teach this course and if so, how would they be trained? We also don't believe that the specifics of a hunter safety course are applicable to all schools across the state nor to all students. As stated, there are avenues for students and families to pursue if they are interested in a hunter safety course without mandating it be taught in our public schools.

For these reasons, MCLA is opposed to LD 543.

Thank you for your time.