

## TESTIMONY NEITHER FOR NOR AGAINST

L.D. 370

### AN ACT TO RAISE THE MINIMUM STATE STANDARD FOR MATHEMATICS EDUCATION FOR A HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA

February 27, 2025

Senator Rafferty, Representative Noonan Murphy and members of the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee. I am Robbie Feinberg, director of communications and government relations for Maine School Management Association, testifying on behalf of the legislative committees of the Maine School Boards Association and Maine School Superintendents Association neither for nor against L.D. 370.

Math is a foundational skill – and ensuring that our students are proficient is a major priority inside our schools. School boards and administrators regularly monitor the effectiveness of their math curriculum, and districts are working to create new pathways and opportunities to help every student become proficient in mathematics.

While our associations appreciate this bill's goal of improving math instruction, we are not sure that this approach will lead to improved results.

MSSA recently conducted a survey of about 50 school districts across Maine. About 95% of the administrators that responded say their high schools already require three years of mathematics for graduation. This statistic shows that the overwhelming majority of districts have already chosen to implement a three-year mathematics requirement.

We believe that decision-making should remain in the hands of local school boards. School boards can consider the full array of classes being offered there – math, science, English, electives, CTE courses – and determine what a graduate needs to know and learn. Our boards are best positioned to listen to their communities and respond to those needs.

We are encouraged that this legislation would require the Department of Education to provide “necessary funding” to carry out the purposes of this bill. However, we ask that you carefully consider the full cost of implementation. Some districts have told us that they would need to hire a new teacher in order to offer enough classes to meet this new mandate, potentially increasing costs by up to \$100,000.

This is not an insignificant expense, and we would want to ensure that the department is provided adequate funding to meet these needs.