



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

2 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, MAINE 04333-0002
(207) 287-1440
TTY: (207) 287-4469

Gary A. Drinkwater

38 Emerald Drive
Milford, ME 04461
Home Phone: (207) 356-8198
Gary.Drinkwater@legislature.maine.gov

March 12, 2025

Testimony
In Support of

LD 282 An Act to Raise the Limit on the Total Number of Public Charter Schools

Good Morning Senator Rafferty, Representative Murphy and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs. I am State Representative Gary Drinkwater representing District 27 which includes Alton, Bradford, Corinth, Hudson, Milford and Argyle Township. I am pleased to sponsor **LD 282 An Act to Raise the Limit on the Total Number of Public Charter Schools**.

Currently the cap in the State of Maine is 10 charter schools. We have nine active schools in the state accompanied by some very long wait lists. Some of these schools are concentrated geographically in mid-southern areas of the state which limits the choices for students from rural settings. The two virtual schools belonging to the group have very long wait lists.

There have been inquiries from institutions of higher learning in this state. For example, both Husson College in Bangor and Maine Maritime Academy in Castine, who are each known for their own distinct specialties, would like the opportunity to create charter school feeder systems for their undergraduate programs. It would only benefit Maine if we had the flexibility to look at these proposals. If we increased the cap for charter schools by one, we could slowly offer more learning opportunities for the children in Maine.

This bill requires that when the cap on the number of public charter schools allowed is reached, the cap increases by one, which is a slow but thoughtful approach to increasing public charter schools in Maine and choices for parents and students. I am going to defer to the experts in queue behind me to go further in to detail.

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gary Drinkwater".

Gary Drinkwater
State Representative