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THE MAINE SENATE
132nd Legislature

LD 512 "An Act to Provide Educational Opportunities for Students
In Secondary Schools with 200 or Fewer Students"
Before the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs
March 12, 2025

Senator Rafferty, Representative Pierce, and members of the joint standing committee on Education and Cultural Affairs:

My name is Senator Stacey Guerin and I represent Senate District 4 which includes all of Piscataquis County and 11 towns in Penobscot County. I am here today to introduce LD 512, "An Act to Provide Educational Opportunities for Students in Secondary Schools with 200 or Fewer Students."

This bill is a crucial step toward ensuring that all students, regardless of where they live, have access to the educational opportunities they deserve. For students in small school districts with fewer than 200 students, educational options can be very limited. These students often lack access to specialized programs, extracurricular activities, or resources that larger districts can offer. By allowing parents and students to choose a school outside of their district, this bill gives families the flexibility to seek out the best fit for their child's needs and interests.

The bill establishes a clear and fair process for making this choice. Parents must notify their resident school by April 1st of their intent to enroll in another school and provide an acceptance letter by May 1st. This gives both parents and schools enough time to plan for the upcoming year. It also ensures that funding is allocated appropriately, with the receiving district invoicing the resident district for the per-pupil rate, not exceeding the state's maximum allowable tuition.

This bill represents a step forward in providing equitable access to education and extracurricular activities while empowering families to make decisions that are in the best interest of their children. I believe it will help level the playing field for students in smaller districts by giving them and their families this option.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I urge you to support this important legislation.