

*132nd Legislature*  
**Senate of**  
**Maine**  
*Senate District 6*

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**Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs on  
LD 513, An Act to Allow the Spouse of a School Board Member to Serve  
as a Stipend Employee Within the School Board's Jurisdiction  
March 13, 2025**

Good afternoon, Senator Rafferty, Representative Murphy, and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs. My name is Marianne Moore. I proudly represent Senate District 6, which includes all of Washington County along with 16 communities in Eastern Hancock County. I am here today to introduce LD 513, *"An Act to Allow the Spouse of a School Board Member to Serve as a Stipend Employee Within the School Board's Jurisdiction."*

Last summer I was contacted by several constituents in Alexander and Eastport when several members of the school boards had to resign their seats because their spouses had taken stipend positions in the school system. They had been able to serve under a 2021 law until it sunsetted on July 1, 2024.

The original bill, sponsored by Rep. Christopher Babbidge in the 130<sup>th</sup> Legislature, passed under the hammer and was signed into law by the governor. Its goal was to prevent needless discrimination against family members of school board members receiving stipend positions, such as baseball coach, chess club, American Field Services (AFS) advisor, or supervisors of other extracurricular activities.

During the 130<sup>th</sup> Legislature, the Maine School Board Management Association and Maine Principals' Association testified against the original version of the bill. They found the bill acceptable when a sunset provision was added in an amendment.

Unfortunately, Rep. Babbidge was not in the legislature last session and apparently no other legislators thought of extending the law after the 2024 sunset; therefore, several school board members in my rural district had to resign. I'm sure many of you know how difficult it can be to find dedicated people willing to serve on municipal boards and in low-paying school jobs. We need to make it easier for good people to fill these positions.

When I checked with the Maine School Board Management Association, I was told they were not aware of any issues that have arisen from Rep. Babbidge's law. In fact, they knew of examples where spouses served in stipend positions and had been a great benefit to the district. They are in support of my bill, asking we keep a sunset date as a precautionary measure.

It is time to continue this policy of allowing spouses of school board members serve in stipend positions for school districts. I encourage you to vote "ought to pass" on LD 513 so we can allow dedicated community members to continue to serve the students of Maine.

Thank you for your consideration of this proposal. I would be happy to answer any questions.