

**Testimony of the Maine Immigrants' Rights Coalition in Support of LD 1089:
An Act to Permanently Fund 55 Percent of the State's Share of Education by
Establishing a Tax on Incomes of More than \$1,000,000
Public Hearing: Wednesday, March 26th, 10:00 AM
Sponsor: Representative Golek**

Senator Grohoski, Representative Cloutier, and esteemed members of the Joint Committee on Taxation,

My name is Ruben Torres, and I am the Advocacy, Communications, and Policy Manager at the Maine Immigrants' Rights Coalition (MIRC). I am here today on behalf of our coalition of over 110 member organizations in support of LD 1089, An Act to Permanently Fund 55 Percent of the State's Share of Education by Establishing a Tax on Incomes of More than \$1,000,000

Maine's immigrant communities are deeply invested in this state. With \$625.8 million paid in taxes in 2023, immigrants in Maine are not just taxpayers—they are small business owners, workers, and parents who depend on and contribute to Maine's public education system. They, like all Mainers, invest in this state every day. But too often, when budget decisions are made, the conversation focuses on what to cut - Will it be our schools? Our healthcare system? The services that working families rely on? - instead of how to strengthen our communities.

This bill ensures that funding for public education is not a political bargaining chip but a reliable commitment. As it stands, Maine's tax code does not differentiate between middle-class families and millionaires. Right now, a teacher earning \$61,600 pays the same top tax rate as a millionaire. LD 1089 corrects this imbalance by asking those earning more than \$1 million a year—less than 1% of Mainers—to generate over \$100 million annually for Pre-K-12 education. The bill presents an opportunity to fund education while maintaining fiscal responsibility. For years, we've been told that there's simply not enough money, that every investment in our schools or healthcare system must come at the expense of something else. The bill presents an opportunity to fund education while maintaining fiscal responsibility.

A well-funded education system benefits all of us. It prepares future workers, strengthens our economy, and ensures that every child—no matter their background or zip code—has the resources they need to succeed.

Maine has an opportunity to move in the direction of working toward a system where all residents, regardless of background, can access quality education without shifting too much of the financial burden onto working-class families.

We urge you to support LD 1089 as a step toward a fairer, stronger Maine—one where every child, no matter their zip code or family income, has the resources to succeed. Thank you for your time and consideration.

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Work Cited

- American Immigration Council. State Profile *Immigrants in Maine*. Accessed March 24th, 2025. <https://map.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/locations/maine/>
 - The state's 56.3k immigrants paid a total of \$625.8m in taxes in 2023, or \$11.1k per immigrant.
- Fitzpatrick, Alex. (2025, March 10) *Where immigrants pay the most taxes*. Axios. <https://www.axios.com/2025/03/10/immigrants-taxes-map>
- For any questions please feel free to contact Ruben Torres at rtorres@maineimmigrantrights.org