



Maine Education Association

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Testimony

In Support Of

LD 607: An Act to Require the Approval of Superintendent Agreements Regarding Transfers of Students Between School Administrative Units.

Jesse Hargrove, President, Maine Education Association

Before the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee

April 2, 2025

Senator Rafferty, Representative Murphy, and other esteemed members of the Labor Committee,

My name is Jesse Hargrove, I am a high school social studies teacher on leave serving as President of the Maine Education Association representing 24,000 members ranging from pre-k through higher education. I write in opposition to *LD 607 An Act to Require the Approval of Superintendent Agreements Regarding Transfers of Students Between School Administrative Units*. This act would destabilize our schools, especially in many of our rural and remote districts, and favor families with means, further draining resources from local communities. This would make staffing and budgeting decisions for administrators and school committees even more challenging. Furthermore, the bill lacks provisions for students who decide to return to their local community school after the staffing and budget decisions have been made.

This bill disproportionately advantages families whose personal and professional lives provide for the flexibility to transport. Parents who have the time and the means to bring their students to and from school, as well as any extracurricular activities. Meanwhile, students from families without that flexibility will remain in a school further diminished by the loss of resources. When students leave a school, associated fixed costs such as transportation, facilities, and staffing remain, yet district funding is reduced.

These agreements may be used for non-academic purposes, such as athletics. Parents of students participating in out of district schools and those extracurricular activities would have an individual interest to vote down school and municipal budgets to reduce local property taxes, depriving other citizens of the community benefits such as theatrical performances, athletic events, and other community functions. Furthermore, the bill lacks any provision requiring parents to seek resolution on matters causing friction. Disputes over playing time on a sports team, roles in a theatrical performance, or evaluation on an assessment could be a catalyst for transfer, with both districts required to accept

Instead, we should be encouraging parents to be involved civically and civilly, participating in local governance, collaborating with school staff, and engaging their children in discussions about school learning activities. LD 607 makes it easier to disengage from the democratic process and works to destabilize our essential public schools.

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