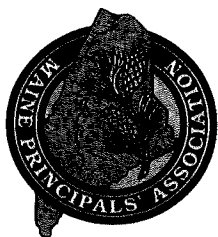


**MAINE
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*MPA is an Equal
Opportunity Organization*

TO: Committee on Housing and Economic Development
FROM: Maine Principals' Association Legislative Committee
RE: In Opposition of LD 1159: An Act to Prohibit Businesses from Refusing to Accept Cash for In-person Payments
DATE: April 3, 2025

Senator Curry, Representative Gere, and distinguished members of the Housing and Economic Development Committee. My name is Dr. Holly Blair, and I am the Executive Director of the Maine Principals' Association – Professional Division. The MPA represents more than 700 PreK-12 principals and assistant principals, CTE Directors and Assistant Directors, and Athletic Directors of public and private schools in Maine. Today I am here on behalf of both the Professional and Interscholastic Divisions of the Maine Principals' Association.

The Maine Principals' Association is in opposition to LD 1159, "An Act to Prohibit Businesses from Refusing to Accept Cash for In-person Payments."

Our organization has significant concerns about being forced to accept cash payments at our events. We have experienced firsthand the risks and losses associated with cash handling. Several years ago, we suffered a devastating loss of \$57,000 due to embezzlement tied directly to a venue that insisted on handling our ticket sales in cash. That experience made clear to us the vulnerabilities and lack of security inherent in managing large sums of cash.

Additionally, many of our ticket tables are located in open, public spaces. This creates serious safety concerns for the staff and volunteers working those tables when they are required to handle cash. To mitigate this, we are often forced to hire additional police officers to be stationed near the cash boxes, which increases our event costs significantly.

As a result of these risks, we have moved our ticketing system to a cashless model and adjusted our pricing to make the process fair and accessible. We raised our ticket prices modestly from \$10/\$5 to \$12/\$6 and eliminated the convenience fee for our patrons, even though we still absorb the processing fees ourselves. This system has improved both security and efficiency for our organization and the people we serve.

LD 1159 would force us to revert to an unsafe and unsustainable system, placing our staff, our events, and our financial stability at risk. We respectfully urge the committee to reject this bill.