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Senator, District 22

THE MAINE SENATE
132nd Legislature

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Augusta, Maine 04333

**LD 1389, "An Act to Create the Building Opportunity Through
Out-of-School Time Program"**
Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Service
April 8, 2025

Senator Ingwersen, Representative Meyer, and honorable members of the Committee on Health and Human Services, my name is Senator Jim Libby. I am the Senate Chair of the Children's Caucus, and I was pleased to cosponsor LD 1389: *An Act to Create the Building Opportunity Through Out-of-School Time Program*.

As both a father and an educator, I know how important out of school time programming is to both students and their families. Seventy percent of children have both parents working outside of the home, and as someone living in and representing a rural district, I know firsthand that there is a lack of out of school time programming in rural areas. In fact in districts such as mine, 83% of children with both parents working outside the home, do not have access to out-of-school programs. These programs are especially needed in the rural areas of our state.

An Act to Create the Building Opportunity Through Out of School Time Program (BOOST), would create a grant program to allow for the expansion of out-of-school time programming for Maine families. This would allow community-based organizations to create new programs, grow existing ones, and reduce barriers for families to access care. Organizations like the Boys and Girls Clubs and the YMCA offer wonderful programming to the children of our state, but their footprint does not encompass all corners of our state. This grant program would allow organizations such as these, and other community based out-of-school time programming providers, to expand their programming into rural areas like my district. These funds could enable an existing program to expand their programming into additional locations, such as setting up out of school time programming in schools utilizing the organization's already proven techniques. This would enable more students to be served under the umbrella of these exiting organizations. Another option under this bill to enable more students to access these programs would be for an organization to apply for grant funding to provide transportation for students from one town to another within an existing program, so that students from more areas can access the wonderful programming that already exists.

Students in rural areas often do not have access to as many opportunities as those in more urban areas. This bill would help to enable these community-based organizations to serve more children, which is what they do best. I urge you to support LD 1389 and to give Maine students a BOOST.