



Mike Tipping
Senator, District 8

THE MAINE SENATE
132nd Legislature

3 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333

Senator Rafferty, Representative Murphy and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs,

I'm Mike Tipping, I represent District 8 in Penobscot County and I'm pleased to introduce **LD 1285, An Act to Prohibit the Consideration of Legacy Preferences or Donor Preferences in Postsecondary Educational Institution Admissions.**

This bill would do as the title says, prohibiting all postsecondary educational institutions in the State from considering legacy preferences - whether family members have gone to that institution - or donor preferences - if a family member has given money to that institution - in the admissions process.

Last year, while signing a similar law to this one, the Governor of Virginia declared that "students can be encouraged to know their hard work and academic career will be recognized on its merit."

A few months ago, the Governor of California also signed a similar bill, declaring that "everyone should be able to get ahead through merit, skill, and hard work[...] we're opening the door to higher education wide enough for everyone, fairly."

It's not every day I get to quote both Governors Youngkin and Newsom in my testimony. It shows the broad understanding, across our country and across all ideologies, that access to the most important opportunity for advancement in life, a college education, should be based on merit and hard work, not money or family connections.

Six states have now passed similar protections since the 2023 decision by the United States Supreme Court banning the use of Affirmative Action programs in college admissions and many others are currently considering it.

The Portland Press Herald recently editorialized in favor of ending these preferences, quoting the organization Lawyers for Civil Rights in noting that "your family's last name and the size of your bank account are not a measure of merit, and should have no bearing on the college admissions process."

This isn't just a matter of fairness, but of state interest. We want our brightest and most dedicated young people to have every opportunity for advancement. We subsidize colleges with tax expenditures and financial aid and we should ensure that they're serving the best interests of Maine.