



# HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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### **LD 1466: An Act Related to Excusing a School from Making Up Missed Days When It Cannot Operate During a Declared State of Emergency**

**Sponsor: Representative Amanda Collamore**  
**April 25, 2025**

Senator Rafferty, Representative Murphy, and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs, my name is Amanda Collamore and I have the great honor of representing House District 68, Pittsfield, Clinton, Burnham, and Troy. I come before you today to present **LD 1466, An Act Related to Excusing a School from Making Up Missed Days When It Cannot Operate During a Declared State of Emergency**. This bill comes at the direct request of superintendents who reached out to me following the devastating winter storms of December 2023 and January 2024.

As I'm sure we all remember, those storms brought **flooded rivers, battered coastlines, downed trees and powerlines, impassable roads, and extended power outages** that left entire communities isolated and without access to essential services—including their schools. In many cases, it wasn't just unsafe—it was physically impossible—for school districts to open their doors. In one instance, a school district's bus garage was under water from the river flooding.

Yet under current law, unless the emergency falls under a very narrow interpretation—such as what we addressed during the COVID-19 pandemic—districts are still required to make up those days or request a specific waiver from the Dept. of Education, even when the conditions are clearly out of their control and part of a **statewide declared emergency**.

During the pandemic, this Legislature wisely recognized the need for flexibility, and we put into statute a waiver process that allowed schools to be excused from making up days when in-person instruction was not possible. Unfortunately, that statute was **limited specifically to public health emergencies**, and unintentionally **left out other types of state-declared emergencies**—like the severe weather and lockdown events we've experienced since COVID-19. LD 1466 corrects that oversight.

This bill ensures that when the **Governor declares a state of emergency**—whether due to weather, natural disaster, or other causes—and when a school is **unable to operate due to that emergency**, the school board does not need to jump through unnecessary hoops. It directs the Department to **amend its rules** so that school districts aren't burdened with a lengthy or redundant waiver application process, something I was told needs the Legislature to give permission for them to do when I was researching this bill.

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When schools are already recovering from downed infrastructure and disrupted learning, the last thing we should ask them to do is submit complex paperwork for something that should be clear and common sense.

This is a modest and reasonable fix that provides schools with **predictable relief** in extraordinary circumstances. It respects local decision-making, acknowledges the realities of emergency response, and reinforces our commitment to student and staff safety without forcing communities to scramble for make-up days that could stretch well into summer.

In short, LD 1466 provides **the clarity, consistency, and compassion** our school leaders have been asking for—and that our students and communities deserve.

I urge the Committee to support this bill, and I'm happy to answer any questions you may have. Thank you.