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*Testimony of Rep. Christina Mitchell introducing*

**LD 1495, An Act to Make the Professional Standards Board Responsible for the Educator Certification Process**

*Before the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee*

Good morning, Senator Rafferty, Representative Murphy and fellow members of the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee. I am Christina Mitchell, and I represent the communities of Cumberland, Long Island and Chebeague Island. I am here today to introduce ***LD 1495: An Act to Make the Professional Standards Board Responsible for the Educator Certification Process***.

The intent of this bill is to reassign the development of educator certification standards from the State Board of Education to the Professional Standards Board. This is an important step in achieving standards that reflect the expertise and experience of *practicing educators*; it will create a shared sense of ownership over the standards, and it will create a level of buy-in among teachers in the state.

At present the State Board of Education holds this authority. The State Board is tasked with many broad, heavy responsibilities. One of those is Chapter 115, which pertains to the Credentialing of Education Personnel, and is presently under review.

The Professional Standards Board, as defined in §13101, is an existing active body of 22 *educators* representing various job classifications. These widespread voices can provide a *more* comprehensive perspective on the certification process and create additional pathways for educator involvement. With these 22 educators from different parts of the state communicating with their colleagues about the process, this is sure to elicit more feedback and enhance engagement.

Currently, the role of the Professional Standards Board is limited to advising the State Board which has many large tasks to complete. The Professional Standards Board represents an underused state resource that could bring together their already appointed group of active educators to positively influence the direction of education.

There is an individual or two here today coming after me that can further explain the history and details of the two different boards. With that in mind, I would defer questions to them to provide specific answers to your questions.

Thank you for your time and consideration.