

To: Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs  
From: Carmella Bear, Indian Island, 04468,  
Date: 4/15/2025

RE: Testimony in support of L.D. 1543, "An Act to Establish the Maine Green Schools Network"

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

My name is Carmella Bear, I am a senior at John Bapst Memorial high School, and a member of the Penobscot Nation.

I am testifying in support of L.D. 1543, "An Act to Establish the Maine Green Schools Network" because I believe every student should be taught about their environment and the future of their planet.

It is no secret that climate change and global warming have caused irreparable harm to our environment. The future of our planet is something that brings many young people anxiety as they are the ones who will feel the brunt of poor climate choices, and will have to take the reins to navigate what will best protect and preserve our environment. That is why the passage of this bill is so important. LD. 1543 would provide students all over Maine with a head start on climate awareness and education. The prioritization of teaching ways to reduce and conserve would demonstrate how much of a difference a student can make on their own.

Not only would this program provide an environmentally conscious education, but students would also have access to traditional ecological teachings. As a Wabanaki person in Maine who has grown up and gone to school on reservation, I have received a plethora of Indigenous education compared to my non-Native peers. The lack of knowledge and awareness surrounding Native issues and history in Maine needs to be changed. This bill would not only aid that effort but would also provide interactive and memorable lessons in ways to better our climate and future.

An Act to Establish a Green Schools Network in Maine, is a necessary and beneficial bill for the future of Maine and our students.

That is why, I respectfully encourage you to support L.D. 1543. Thank you for your time and consideration of my testimony.

Sincerely,

Carmella Bear