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*Testimony of Representative Edward Crockett introducing*  
**LD 1571, An Act to Modify Certification Standards for Full-time Teachers in  
Public Charter Schools and for Educational Technicians**  
*Before the Joint Standing Committee Education and Cultural Affairs*

Senator Rafferty, Representative Murphy and fellow colleagues of the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee, my name is Ed Crockett, and I represent District 112 which is part of Portland and Falmouth. I am pleased to present to you **LD 1571, An Act to Modify Certification Standards for Full-time Teachers in Public Charter Schools and for Educational Technicians.**

This bill seeks to accomplish two goals. The first is to ensure that public charter school students receive instruction from certified teaching personnel. Currently, in statute, those teaching in charter schools are held to a different certification standard as follows: “All full-time teachers in a public charter school must either hold an appropriate teaching certificate or become certified within three years of the date they are hired, except for those with an advanced degree, professional certification or unique expertise or experience in the curricular area in which they teach.”

Under this language, passed in 2011, data pulled from the Educator Identification System (MEIS) in January 2025 shows that, of the seven brick-and-mortar public charter schools, 31% of teachers do not hold valid teacher certifications. This is concerning, especially when we compare academic and attendance performance to that of virtual charter

schools, where only 6% of the staff do not hold a valid credential. While we know public charters provide unique experiences for students, we know the requirements outlined in Chapter 115 exist to provide the highest quality personnel for students, and Maine students attending charter schools deserve high-quality also. It is important to remember these educators are also eligible for alternative pathways.

The second goal of this bill is to remove a certification barrier that exists for education technicians who wish to reenter the profession. Presently, if they are in the state's system, they are forever held to the renewal requirements within Chapter 115. This means if their certificate expires, they will need to complete recertification hours to return to the profession. This creates a barrier for those who wish to reenter the profession after working in another field, making it easier for someone off the street without any experience. This bill seeks to remove the credit hour requirement for an education technician who has left the profession for more than two years and whose certificate has expired but wishes to return. This will remove a time and financial burden, allowing them to support students, where job-embedded training can happen once they are employed.

I would be happy to try and answer questions but will defer to Mallory Cook, Director of Training and Early Educator from the Maine Education Association, who will be coming up after me. Thank you.