



# HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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*Testimony of Rep. Benjamin Hymes*

### **LD 1759, "An Act to Allow Firefighters to Be Eligible for State College Funding"** *Before the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs*

April 28, 2025

Good morning, Senator Rafferty, Representative Murphy, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs. My name is Representative Benjamin Hymes, and I proudly represent House District 38. I am here to present **LD 1759, "An Act to Allow Firefighters to Be Eligible for State College Funding"**.

Last year, when OSHA considered stricter regulations, it became clear that many municipalities struggle to fund basic firefighter training. The potential for massive budget shortfalls in Maine's firehouses sparked my search for a better funding solution—one that would also help ease the growing municipal tax burden.

Supporting firefighter education should be a top priority. The cost of training a firefighter is comparable to just one semester hour of college, yet the return—the ability to save a home, a vehicle, or a life—is priceless.

Importantly, this bill does not request new appropriations. It simply redirects existing education funds to the Fire Services Institute to cover the cost of firefighter training statewide.

I would respectfully suggest amending the bill title to better reflect its intent: "An Act to Fund Firefighters' Education."

Thank you for your time and consideration. I would be happy to answer any questions.

Benjamin Hymes  
State Representative