



# HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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*Testimony of Representative Nina Milliken presenting*

## **LD 1575, An Act to Allow a Legislator to Choose to Be Paid on an Annual Basis**

*Before the Joint Standing Committee on State and Local Government*

Good afternoon, Senator Baldacci, Representative Salisbury, and friends and colleagues on the Joint Standing Committee on State and Local Government. My name is Nina Milliken and I am proud to represent the people of Blue Hill, Brooksville, Castine, Sedgwick, Surry and Trenton in the Maine House. I am pleased to be before you today to present **LD 1575, An Act to Allow a Legislator to Choose to Be Paid on an Annual Basis**.

The bill is pretty straight forward. It would give legislators the option to have their salary distributed over the full year, rather than receiving it only while we are in session. This would not increase anyone's pay or change our benefits — it would simply allow members to opt in to whichever payment schedule best fits their family's needs.

As you know, legislative pay in Maine is modest. When that pay is compressed into just a few months, it can make it difficult for some families to budget and plan for expenses like mortgages, child care and healthcare. Spreading payments out over the year would provide stability for those who need it, without forcing any change on those who prefer the current system.

In anticipation of this hearing, I reached out to Suzanne Gresser in the Executive Director's Office. She has some relatively minor concerns which she may bring before the committee. I'm confident that with some straightforward adjustments, we can implement this option without any or much added cost to the state. I am very happy to work with the Executive Director's Office to sort out these concerns. Every school system in Maine has similar options for their teaching staff that we can look to for best practices.

I appreciate your time and consideration and am happy to take any questions.