

# Maine Administrators of Services for Children with Disabilities



## Testimony in Support of LD 933: An Act to Increase to 100 Percent the State Share of Funding for Special Education Costs of All School Administrative Units

Senator Rafferty, Representative Murphy, and Distinguished Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs. My name is Gay Anne McDonald and I am the Executive Director for the Maine Administrators of Services for Children with Disabilities (MADSEC).

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on behalf of the MADSEC Legislative Committee in support of LD 933: *An Act to Increase to 100 Percent the State Share of Funding for Special Education Costs of All School Administrative Units*.

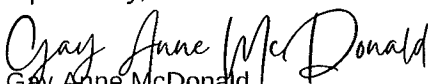
LD 933 represents a vital commitment to ensuring special education state funding for students with disabilities in Maine. We believe an increase in special education state funding is essential in supporting local school districts in providing the necessary services required under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) to meet the individual, complex needs of students with disabilities.

While LD 933 amends Sec. 3. 20-A MRSA §15689, sub-§1, to increase the minimum state share of a school administrative unit's special education costs under the essential programs and services (EPS) school funding formula to 100%, beginning in fiscal year 2026-2027, we recognize there are still concerns and complexities with the EPS funding formula. MADSEC would like to acknowledge the ongoing study conducted by the Maine Educational Policy Research Institute (MEPRI) on EPS funding. This study will provide important insights and potential recommendations regarding the state's current funding structures, including special education. We recognize, however, that the study's final conclusions are forthcoming and any statute changes would need to follow legislative procedures. Until such time, it remains imperative to move forward with current legislative measures, such as LD 933, to increase the minimum state share of a school administrative unit's special education costs.

Additionally, with MADSEC's endorsement of LD 933, we also acknowledge there are significant budgetary constraints, such that an increase to 100% state share may not be feasible at this time. Should the Committee consider this to be such a constraint that an increase of 100% is not workable, we ask that an increase above 55% be considered. In advocating for an increase in special education state funding, MADSEC stresses the immediate need to secure state funding for the required resources for special education programs in Maine school districts, especially during times of uncertainty in the allocation of federal funding through the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Medicaid.

Thank you for your time, dedication, and commitment in supporting Maine's special education programs to meet the needs of students with disabilities across our state.

Respectfully,

  
Gay Anne McDonald  
Executive Director

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