



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

2 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, MAINE 04333-0002
(207) 287-1400
TTY: MAINE RELAY 711

Michelle N. Boyer

333 Fowler Road
Cape Elizabeth, ME 04107
Residence: (207) 239-6318
Michelle.Boyer@legislature.maine.gov

May 6, 2025

Testimony of Representative Michelle Boyer

LD 1087, An Act to Increase the State's Share of Major Capital School Construction Costs

Before the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs

Senator Rafferty, Representative Murphy and members of the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee, my name is Michelle Boyer, and I represent House District 123, which includes the town of Cape Elizabeth. I am pleased to present today **LD 1087, An Act to Increase the State's Share of Major Capital School Construction Costs**.

This bill echoes what we have recently seen from the Governor's Commission on School Construction. On page 10 of the Interim Report issued April 15, 2025, it states as a potential strategy, "Requiring districts to contribute funds, rather than the existing all-or-nothing state funding approach, could increase capacity for more projects."¹ That's what this bill does: it takes the current amount of money we allocate now and changes the way in which that money is distributed. Under this bill, the state will contribute greater than 25% or a percentage equal to the state share percentage of the school administrative unit's total cost of education.

This approach would help stretch the current resources we have while we continue to work on a more comprehensive solution. For a community like mine, a 25% contribution from the state would help to alleviate the taxpayer burden. Though Cape Elizabeth is known for its beautiful coastline and many resources, we have residents who are struggling with the increase of property taxes from a variety of factors. Data from United For ALICE shows that 24% of homes in Cape Elizabeth are considered to be asset limited, income constrained, employed households meaning that these families earn more than the federal poverty level, but not enough to cover the basic cost-of-living in our county.²

¹ <https://www.maine.gov/doe/sites/maine.gov.doe/files/inline-files/Governors%20Commission%20-%20School%20Construction%20Interim%20Summary%20-%2004.18.2025.pdf>

² <https://www.unitedforalice.org/county-reports/maine>

This bill would stretch the current number of resources we have a little bit further and help some communities approve a new school at the ballot box. It's important that we help as many schools as possible in Maine with the resources we have. As you are all aware, aging and inadequate school buildings is a prevalent problem across our state. The average school building in Maine was built between 1955-1975, average an age of 54 years.³ With costs continuing to rise, fewer and fewer schools are being built.

LD 1087 aims to address our state's pressing need to support school construction projects. We cannot wait to support these projects once schools across the state are in dire disrepair. The time to take action is now.

Thank you and I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

³ <https://www.maine.gov/doe/sites/maine.gov.doe/files/inline-files/Governors%20Commission%20-%20November%2015%20Summary%20Meeting%20-%2011.26.2024.pdf>