

**MAINE
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TO: Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs
FROM: Maine Principals' Association Legislative Committee
RE: In Opposition of LD 2192: An Act to Protect Student by Ensuring Schools Have Complete Information About School Employees and Applicants for Employment
DATE: February 24, 2026

Senator Rafferty, Representative Murphy, and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs. My name is Dr. Holly Blair, and I am the Executive Director of the Maine Principals' Association – Professional Division. The MPA represents more than 700 PreK-12 principals and assistant principals, CTE Directors and Assistant Directors, and Athletic Directors of public and private schools in Maine.

The Maine Principals' Association's Legislative Committee is opposed to LD 2192. We share the Legislature's commitment to protecting students and ensuring that schools employ qualified, safe, and ethical professionals. However, we believe this bill raises significant constitutional, practical, and privacy concerns.

First, the proposal may implicate protections under the Fifth, Sixth, and Fourteenth Amendments by requiring disclosure of investigations or allegations that may have been unsubstantiated or never adjudicated and without due process. We are particularly concerned about individuals who may have be the subject of retaliatory complaints or unfounded allegations. Even when such claims are fully investigated and determined to be unsubstantiated, this bill would require disclosure of those matters—potentially reaching back 20 years. Requiring applicants to report allegations that were never substantiated risks causing lasting reputational harm.

Second, schools already have multiple mechanisms to obtain relevant information. Administrators routinely:

- Conduct thorough reference checks, including contacting individuals not listed on the application;
- Ask direct questions such as, "Would you hire this person again?"
- Request additional clarification when needed; and
- Require fingerprinting and criminal background checks approved by the Maine Department of Education.

These existing safeguards are meaningful and effective.

The bill places an additional administrative burden on school leaders who are already managing extensive responsibilities. Hiring processes are thorough and time-intensive as it is, and adding further mandatory documentation and verification requirements will increase workload for administrators who already have full plates.

We believe it will unintentionally reduce the pool of individuals willing to pursue employment in schools. Expanded disclosure requirements could discourage qualified candidates from applying, particularly if they fear reputational harm from disclosing unsubstantiated or decades-old matters. This impact could be especially devastating for rural schools, which already face significant challenges recruiting and retaining educators due to a shrinking pipeline into the profession. If the Legislature seeks to strengthen student protections, we encourage consideration of enhanced fingerprint-based background checks or improved statewide reporting mechanisms rather than mandating disclosure of potentially unsubstantiated investigations.

We are committed to student safety, however we simply believe LD 2192, as written, is not the appropriate path forward.

Please note that this testimony was submitted based off of the original bill and not additional amendments that may be presented.