



Senator Chipman, Representative Tipping and other members of the Taxation Committee,

My name is John Kosinski and I am here on behalf of the Maine Education Association to testify against LD 107, An Act to Lower the Maine Individual Income Tax Incrementally to Zero. The MEA is opposed to this legislation because it is both fiscally and morally irresponsible.

Lowering Maine's income tax as called for in LD 107 will only serve to further starve our state of the resources we need – resources we need to help our people succeed, resources we need to help our state grow, and the resources we need to prepare for a brighter future. At the same time, this bill will only serve to rig our tax code further so that the wealthy few see huge gains, but the rest of us will be left with higher property taxes and underfunded services.

This bill is morally irresponsible because it prioritizes income tax cuts over fully funding our schools, as voters demanded at the ballot box on multiple occasions. Education is an investment, but Maine has struggled as a state to provide the basic funding necessary to help our kids grow, all the while our kids have more needs than ever before.

This bill prioritizes tax cuts over funding for key services for children. During recent testimony before this Committee I highlighted the failures in our state's Child Protective Services Program. The program lacked the resources it needed to actually protect children.

This bill prioritizes tax cuts over funding our Child Development Services program, or CDS. This program is designed to help kids, ages 0-5, and their families address learning issues or cognitive development in the early ages. This program saves money and makes lives better. We have underfunded this program for so long, starved it of resources. The staff was underpaid and underappreciated and neglected.

The problem with LD 107 is it prioritizes tax cuts over all else. It prioritizes tax cuts instead of funding our schools and protecting our children. It prioritizes tax cuts over healthcare and higher education for Maine people. It prioritizes tax cuts over making our state a brighter, healthier place to live and work.

For these reasons, we ask you to vote ought not to pass on LD 107.