

TESTIMONY

In Support Of

LD 261, Resolve, Directing the Department of Education To Study Truancy Trends in the State and Develop Recommendations for Increasing Student Attendance and Reducing Truancy
Dan Allen, Professional Development Director, Maine Education Association
Before the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs

February 24, 2021

Senator Daughtry, Representative Brennan and other esteemed members of the Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs:

My name is Daniel Allen and I am the Instruction and Professional Development director for the Maine Education Association (MEA) which represents 24,000 teachers, education support professionals, and retired educators across Maine.

I am here to testify in support of LD 261, Resolve, Directing the Department of Education To Study Truancy Trends in the State and Develop Recommendations for Increasing Student Attendance and Reducing Truancy.

The MEA believes any positive action we can take to reduce truancy will have a material impact on the lives of students and the future of Maine. However, to take action, we need information on the frequency and scope of truancy in our schools. We welcome this effort to gather that data. Truancy is an ongoing issue in many schools across the country, and anecdotally we understand that truancy has increased as a result of the pandemic. Since we do not know how long the current teaching and learning conditions will continue, it will be important to explore this issue in the context of virtual and in-person learning, as well as schools that have made virtual learning the focus of their program. Therefore, a study is needed.

For these reasons, the MEA encourages you to vote “ought to pass” on LD 261.