



49 Community Drive, Augusta, ME 04330
Telephone: (207) 622-3473 Fax: (207) 626-2968
Website: www.msmaweb.com



TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF

L.D. 261

RESOLVE, DIRECTING THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO STUDY TRUANCY TRENDS IN THE STATE AND DEVELOP RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INCREASING STUDENT ATTENDANCE AND REDUCING TRUANCY

Senator Daughtry, Representative Brennan and members of the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee. I am Eileen King, deputy executive director of Maine School Management Association, testifying on behalf of the legislative committees of the Maine School Boards Association and Maine School Superintendents Association in support of L.D. 261.

Concerns around truant and chronically absent students have increased during the pandemic because not all students engage in online learning or have reliable connections and devices. Several prominent stories in daily papers covering Maine also focused on high truancy rates in some of our larger districts, but truancy is often used interchangeably with high absenteeism. Both are issues, and they need to be accurately defined and understood.

Work already has been done by the DOE's Maine School Safety Center to raise awareness around this issue. It can be found on the safety center website <https://www.maine.gov/doe/safety/tools>. The title is: [Truancy Non-Attendees Presentation 12.15.2020](#).

This resolve would have the Department of Education look at truancy trends and develop recommendations. Our associations would welcome the opportunity to be part of the discussion.