

Testimony for: LD 566 “An Act to Address Labor Market Inequities in the School Funding Formula” Sponsored by Representative William Tuell.

Senator Daughtry, Representative Brennan and other distinguished members of the Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs.

My name is Scott Porter, Superintendent of Schools for AOS 96, which is comprised of 11 towns in the Machias Area.

LD 566 “An Act to Address Labor Market Inequities in the School Funding Formula”, if passed, would change the Labor Market Regional adjustment for staff salaries in the Essential Programs and Services Funding Formula (EPS). In AOS 96 and in other areas in rural Maine, the EPS funding formula has been especially challenging, due to the regional adjustment in the current EPS funding formula. Many districts have a regional adjustment less than 1.0, therefore significant amounts of money per student are deducted from the EPS calculation. In AOS 96, there is a 16% reduction (in salaries and benefits) due to the regional index adjustment being set at 0.84, the lowest in the State.

The regional index adjustment is a major driver in the EPS funding formula. LD 566, if passed, would move school districts to a 1.0 regional index adjustment incrementally over a 3 year period. It is not the intent of this bill to take money away from districts that exceed the 1.0 regional adjustment index, so additional funding would be necessary if LD 566 becomes law.

It is my hope that you will support LD 566.

Thank you.

Scott K. Porter