

## TESTIMONY

In support

### **LD 144: An Act To Fund Capital Improvements to Career and Technical Education Centers and Regions To Bolster Maine's Future Workforce**

**March 17, 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 144, An Act To Fund Capital Improvements to Career and Technical Education Centers and Regions To Bolster Maine's Future Workforce.

Maine's Career and Technical Education schools have been perennially underfunded and often lack resources and up-to-date equipment, all of which hinder our students' ability to be fully prepared for the workforce.

MEA is extremely supportive of providing CTE centers with the resources they need to help prepare more students for careers and college. The programs are often using outdated equipment and in programs like automotive, computer, or building construction technology, it is important for students to have access to the tools and resources that they will actually be using in their field once employed.

While it is true that many careers require some on-the-job training, but without access to appropriate tools and technology, they will need more training than they normally should. This can put these students at a disadvantage when they apply for jobs and it creates an additional burden on employers who expect applicants to be as ready as possible for work on day 1.

We should be working together to make sure these students are ready to enter the workforce and we can do that by providing the CTE schools with access to funds to help them update and replace large and expensive equipment. This issue is obviously important to the people of Maine as there has been no shortage of bills to provide more funding to CTE schools, and there have been several bills specifically focused on the need to provide funding for capital improvements. We hope this Legislature can commit to providing the funds these schools need to do the job we ask of them.

For these reasons, the MEA encourages you to vote “ought to pass” on LD 144.