

State of Maine
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Testimony of Wilson G. Hess, Chairman of the State Board of Education

In Support of: L.D. 313: An Act To Advance Career and Technical Education Opportunities in Maine

Before the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs

Sponsored by: Senator Woodsome

Date: April 9, 2021

Senator Rafferty, Representative Brennan, and Honorable Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs:

My name is Wilson Hess. I am the Chair of the State Board of Education and I am here today on behalf of the State Board to speak in support of L.D. 313: An Act To Advance Career and Technical Education Opportunities in Maine.

The State Board of Education believes that Maine students should be afforded robust, high quality, and comprehensive educational offerings that lead to careers which may be enhanced by, but do not require, traditional 2 or 4-year advanced degree programs. In high school programs college readiness receives a lot of attention. Career-centered pathways deserve the same. The Board's 5-year strategic plan for Perkins V federal funds, which support career and technical education statewide, endorses "increasing access to CTE for all students by reducing barriers such as high school scheduling at the secondary level" and "increasing experiences in grades 9-12 CTE program areas with special emphasis on grade 9-10 concentrators." The concept draft of LD 313 is consistent with those goals.

The State Board looks forward to seeing a more fully developed narrative for this bill.

I would be happy to answer any questions the Committee may have or to provide additional information for the work session on this bill.