



April 9, 2021

Senator Daughtry, Representative Brennan and Members of the 130th Legislature's Education and Cultural Affairs Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify regarding *LD 313 - An Act to Advance Career and Technical Education Opportunities in Maine*. The testimony is neither for or against LD 313 but given to ask that you consider adding adult education to this bill as it moves forward.

This proposed legislation is interesting to read since the Maine Adult Education Association has been having many conversations about doing the same thing proposed here but expanding CTE offerings at the adult learner level. It might be interesting to explore the possibilities of taking this approach - exploring interest in career and technical education - at all applicable ages that are currently underserved.

Maine Adult Education Association supports authorizing a thorough inventory of services provided to Maine's adults via CTE centers or regions, exactly as this legislation presents for younger K-12 students. While use of CTE centers by adult education programs differs greatly around the state, we know that Maine Adult Education is the "on ramp" for adults with lower educational skills to get back on track. In some areas of the state, there are successful collaborative agreements between CTE Regions and/or Centers and local adult education programs that allow those programs to access CTE facilities after the regular school day. By gathering an inventory of what works well, we will be able to clearly see where more collaboration and resources are needed to serve adults in CTE training programs.

Maine Adult Education Association also supports involvement in a Career and Technical Education Business Roundtable that includes business leaders so that training programs can understand current and future need for training that leads directly to employment. Adult education programs are already doing this work in collaboration with the Workforce Boards across the state that are seated with many stakeholders in labor, education and business.

Addressing the barriers to those in need of receiving a technical education is also something that is much needed. Daily, those in adult education programs work with adult learners who need transportation and childcare and access to funding for registration fees, supplies and equipment. CTE centers and Adult Education programs deal with teacher shortages and funding to staff training opportunities and purchase materials and equipment. Outlining and

bringing these barriers to the forefront will help more adults receive necessary education and training as the barriers are overcome.

Please consider broadening LD 313 to advance CTE training for all learners in need, including adults.

Thank you.

Sincerely,
Shirley N. Wright
Shirley Wright, Executive Director
Maine Adult Education Association