



Maine Municipal
Association

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Testimony of the Maine Municipal Association

Neither For Nor Against

LD 1188 – *An Act to Include Librarians and Career and Technical Education Teachers in the Minimum \$40,000 Salary Initiative*
April 12, 2021

Senator Rafferty, Representative Brennan and members of the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee, my name is Neal Goldberg, and I am providing testimony neither for nor against LD 1188 on behalf of MMA's Legislative Policy Committee.

All educators, whether they be a regular classroom instructor, librarian, or career and technical region educator deserve to be compensated fairly and this bill would be a step towards better salaries for many young and new educators in Maine.

However, our members oppose legislation in which the state determines compensation of community employees on behalf of municipal officials and local school boards. The state should not be determining the salaries of public employees compensated by local tax-payers. Municipal employees, including educators, work for the community and their compensation is determined by the value communities place on the services they provide and the qualifications they bring. Teachers, firefighters, law enforcement officers, garbage collectors, wastewater treatment operators and other municipal employees deserve fair compensation but salary increases should be left in the capable hands of those officials most knowledgeable of the occupation, the community, and the individual's professional qualifications.

This bill puts more at stake than just a handful of salary raises, it is about local control and the state mandating what our members must do. To the extent that a statewide salary standard is enacted, the Association feels it should spearheaded by school districts and departments and negotiated directly with the Maine School Management Association and Maine Educators Association.

There is also concern that while a salary increase is merited for librarians and CTE teachers, \$40,000 does not account for the cost and standards of living in different regions of the state. While the salary increase may be needed for an educator living in Portland, as noted by our members, few people in certain areas like Somerset County earn above \$40,000 and can live comfortably on less.

Thank you for your time and consideration for this very important matter.