



Rebecca Millett

PMB 375, 50 Market Street, Suite 1A
South Portland, ME 04106
Residence: (207) 415 - 3770
Rebecca.Millett@legislature.maine.gov

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

2 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, MAINE 04333-0002
(207) 287-1400
TTY: MAINE RELAY 711

Testimony of Rep. Rebecca Millett presenting

**LD 651, An Act to Stabilize Student Count in Maine's School Funding Formula
*Before the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs Committee***

Senator Rafferty, Representative Brennan and esteemed colleagues of the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee, I am Representative Rebecca Millett, and I represent House District 30 which is most of Cape Elizabeth. I am pleased to present to you **LD 651, An Act To Stabilize Student Count in Maine's School Funding Formula.**

During the presentation of the administration's proposed biennial budget, this committee received the news that public school enrollment declined significantly for the academic year 20/21 especially in the early elementary grades. The administration proposed a one-year change for the 21/22 school year in the pupil to teacher ratio from 17:1 to 16:1 for elementary schools as the way to mitigate the negative impact on schools' cost of education calculations and funding levels. This was enacted earlier this month. However, the issue will remain for the 22/23 school year hence the need for this legislation.

After discussions with MDOE, I am presenting an amendment that we believe will address the issue for those districts that experienced significant enrollment decreases - much like Maine's "sudden and severe disruption" policy for a community's valuation. My hope is that we won't see precipitous drops in enrollment like this again, but should that not be the case, whether for a single school district or for districts across the state, this is an important insurance policy for those communities.

I hope you will join me in supporting this bill, and I am happy to answer any questions.

An Act To Stabilize Attending Student Count in Maine's School Funding Formula

Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:

Sec. 1. 20-A MRSA §15674, sub-§1, as amended by PL 2017, c. 284, Pt. C, §29, is further amended to read:

D. Beginning in fiscal year 2022-23:

(1) The average of the attending pupil counts for October 1st of the 2 most recent calendar years prior to the year of funding, reported in accordance with section 6004, including the counts of students enrolled in an alternative education program made in accordance with 5104-A, except that if a school administrative unit experiences a decline in total attending school administrative unit student enrollment of 10% or more in the most recent year, the pupil counts for October 1st of the 3 most recent calendar years prior to the year of funding will be used unless that count is less than the average of the 2 most recent calendar years.

SUMMARY

This bill requires the Department of Education to use a 3-year average for attending pupil counts, if that average is greater than the current 2-year average, when a school administrative unit experiences a decrease of 10% or more of total school administrative unit attending student enrollment in the most recent year.