



April 22, 2021

Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs

Maine State Legislature

100 State House Station

Augusta, ME 04333

Good afternoon Senator Rafferty, Representative Brennan, and Distinguished Members of the Committee.

My name is Mairead Ferrie, and my whole life I was homeschooled until Maine Ocean School. In 2018 we moved aboard a sailboat and started cruising. We lived aboard the boat for almost 3 years. Towards the end of the lifestyle I was going into high school and I was looking for a high school that would be flexible with our lifestyle. One day, we came across the facebook page for Maine Ocean School and I made the decision to apply. I got in and I was quite excited for the start of the school year and to meet new peers who were also interested in the ocean. Towards the months leading up to the school year I met with Dr. Bragdon multiple times. She was supportive and was telling me about what the deal was and how the school could support the lifestyle my family was living.

On the third day of the school year my mom was told her cancer returned in her brain and lungs. The teachers and they were amazing and extremely supportive as we were in the process of selling the boat, finding moms chemo and radiation plans and moving multiple times. I feel like the teachers are always asking if we needed help and how they can best support me as a student in the school. Mrs. Kristie is also absolutely amazing, she is so supportive and amazing and is extremely helpful. As I started to fall behind due to stress, moving and extra family time, I reached out to Dr. Bragdon for some help. I set up a time with Ms. Kristie and she made me a spreadsheet and helped me get back on track.

One thing I enjoy about the school are all of the hands-on projects. I definitely learn better doing hands-on learning than being taught in a traditional lecture style classroom, and the school really helps that. Most of the assignments are pretty enjoyable as well and I enjoy doing them. I enjoy the ocean theme as well. I enjoy learning about topics while having an ocean theme at the same time. I enjoy that they value time away from the laptops and school. The school also makes an effort to teach us real world scenarios and prepare us for them. They make it clear that they want us to succeed and be successful in life and it's an amazing thing to see.

Please say yes to bill LD 1389 so that other students can get the support and experience what I have.

Thank you, Mairead Ferrie