

Marwa Hassanien  
Bangor

Dear Joint Standing Commission on Education and Cultural Affairs,

My name is Marwa Hassanien, a parent and school board member in Bangor. I testify on my own behalf and not as a representative of my school board. I would like to thank you for this opportunity to testify on behalf of this outstanding bill. As a Muslim parent and DEI advocate for many immigrant and international families, I know firsthand about many stories of discrimination, racism, bigotry, and hatred. Many of the families I have heard never complain due to fear of retaliation and violation of their immigration status, so sadly they accept the horrible treatment they/their children are subjected to. An education ombudsman would be an incredible mediator and resource that handles and prevents bias and microaggressions from happening to these families. Not only is it an ethical thing to do, but in a highly homogenous, medically-underserved state like ours, we need to keep diverse, talented individuals here for workforce and economic development, as well. Cultural competency and humility are often severely lacking in our school districts and communities, and I believe this bill would be an invaluable asset and solution to our evolving state. Thank you.