

TESTIMONY NEITHER FOR NOR AGAINST

L.D. 518

RESOLVE, DIRECTING THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO REVIEW AND ASSESS EXISTING EDUCATIONAL MANDATES

Senator Rafferty, Representative Brennan and members of the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee. I am Eileen King, deputy executive director of Maine School Management Association, testifying on behalf of the legislative committees of the Maine School Boards Association and Maine School Superintendents Association neither for nor against L.D. 518.

I should make it clear at the start that our associations oppose educational mandates and have consistently done so. We are neither for nor against this bill because we don't know how effective such a mandate review would be.

Mandate reviews were done by the DOE in 2014, 2011 and 2009, but they have not discouraged legislation mandating curriculum.

We also don't believe this is the year to task the department with another review given the urgency around other initiatives – the most paramount being returning all children to school safely in the fall.

What we would like to see done instead is the adoption of a bill currently tabled in committee, L.D. 278, which calls for establishing a stakeholder review committee to consider mandates when they are first introduced. The review committee, comprised of people in the field, including teachers and administrators, would provide the committee with information around the proposed bill's positive and negative effects and its costs.

This proposal was first brought to the Education Committee by former House chair and teacher, Tori Kornfield, who now serves on the State Board of Education.

We believe it is a thoughtful approach to the problem of mandates that would help everyone better understand what's already included in curriculum under the Learning Results standards. It also would allow people in the field to weigh in on curriculum proposals they believe have benefit.