

TESTIMONY NEITHER FOR NOR AGAINST

L.D. 187—AN ACT TO REQUIRE EDUCATION ABOUT AFRICAN-AMERICAN HISTORY  
AND THE HISTORY OF THE GENOCIDE

L.D. 215—AN ACT TO REQUIRE INSTRUCTION ON THE HISTORY OF  
GENOCIDE AND THE HOLOCAUST

L.D. 1664—AN ACT TO INTEGRATE AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDIES  
INTO AMERICAN HISTORY EDUCATION

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. 187, L.D. 215, and L.D. 1664.

School Boards and superintendents traditionally oppose curriculum mandate bills, but did not want to be misinterpreted because of our position. We understand the importance and the urgency to address the issues raised in these bills, and are neither for nor against so we can express that view while still opposing mandates.

We are concerned and alarmed by the hate crimes happening in parts of our country because of a person's race, ethnicity, skin color or religion and believe the best way to counter racism is with education.

Nationally there is a Black Lives Matter at School organization calling for an increase in Black history and ethnic studies instruction. The Anti-Defamation League (ADL) also has raised the alarm around the increase in anti-Semitic hate crimes in the country.

Through the state associations we represent and their national affiliates – the National School Boards Association and the American Association of School Administrators – we have influence and will use it when it comes to the rewriting of textbooks and developing curriculum materials and resources that have left out critical parts of our national and world history.