

Emmanuel Boss  
Orono  
LD 512

Dear legislators,

The University of Maine has suffered decreasing enrollment due to both COVID as well as the free tuition afforded to in-state students going to community college. As a result of this as well as increasing costs while tuition has not increased, the university has found itself in a significant deficit. This deficit is now being covered by, among other approaches, encouraging many senior faculty to retire by providing them retirement incentive. This action resulted in departments becoming significantly short staffed and with the danger of a decrease in the quality of the education provided to UMaine's students.

I strongly support LD 512 as it will assist UMaine in increasing enrollment which, I hope, will assist in hiring of qualified teaching staff. The state of Maine needs a vibrant university system to support its education as well as research needs.

I also feel there is room for cost savings at the UM System. The total number of university students in ME is about 23,000, equivalent to a mid-size college in many other states (that are run by one president and one administration). Yet, in ME, we have much duplication of positions between many small campuses + a whole administration around the chancellor. One wonders at the costs saving that could be had if all were run as a single campus or, as was done in Connecticut I believe, if the main campus in Orono being one university (as a research intensive university it has special needs) and all the other campuses being run as a system with one president and provost.

Respectfully yours, Emmanuel Boss, Orono, Maine