



The Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs  
Testimony from Kaitlin Young, Policy and Program Manager, Educate Maine

### **In Support Of**

L.D. 753: “An Act to Allow Retired Teachers and Educational Technicians to Be Recertified”

Senator Rafferty, Representative Brennan, and distinguished members of the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee, I am Kaitlin Young, the Policy and Program Manager of Educate Maine, a business-led education advocacy organization. Our organization is committed to ensuring that all Maine learners reach their greatest educational and economic potential. One of the most critical factors in achieving this vision is the availability of a well-prepared, diverse, and stable educator workforce. This is why we support L.D. 753: “An Act to Allow Retired Teachers and Educational Technicians to Be Recertified.”

Like the rest of the nation, Maine is facing a severe staffing crisis in schools and districts. [According to state retirement data, Maine lost more than 1,200 school employees in the 2021-2022 school year.](#) Allowing retired teachers and educational technicians to be recertified and return to the classroom is a low-cost, short-term recruitment strategy that could help address this challenge by bringing experienced and qualified educators back to the workforce.

Retired teachers and educational technicians are an asset to Maine schools. Through our work across our state, we have seen many of these dedicated professionals continue to work in education in other capacities after retirement, such as substitute teaching, mentoring, or volunteering in schools. [According to a research report from the Learning Policy Institute](#), more experienced teachers support greater student learning for their colleagues, the school as a whole, and their students. As a career educator, I have been fortunate to have received mentorship and support from retired educators. They have imparted their knowledge and expertise and shared valuable experiences contributing to my growth and development as an educator. Recertifying retired educators, and educational technicians would allow these experienced professionals to return to the classroom and share their knowledge and skills with the next generation of learners.

Professional development is critical for all educators to maintain their certification and stay up-to-date with evolving teaching practices. However, retired teachers and educational technicians may face challenges in accessing the necessary professional development to renew their certifications, resulting in certification lapses. While we acknowledge that the current language in the bill could address that barrier by granting a professional certificate, we encourage this committee to consider what additional resources local districts may need to ensure that these candidates receive appropriate training and support in their ongoing professional learning to meet the continuously evolving needs of Maine learners effectively.

In conclusion, we encourage you to support L.D. 753: “An Act to Allow Retired Teachers and Educational Technicians to Be Recertified.” We believe that allowing retired educators to return to the classroom is a low-cost, short-term recruitment strategy that could help address the severe staffing crisis facing Maine schools and districts. Thank you for your time. I am happy to provide additional information in upcoming work sessions.