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April 5, 2023

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to express my concern regarding the public education system in Maine, and specifically, the importance of fairly compensating our professional educators. As a business leader responsible for over 300 employees, I understand the critical role that education plays in preparing a well-educated workforce, which is critical to our success as we compete with companies from around the world.

It is troubling to me that legislation established a minimum salary for our educators. However, my greater concern is that the proposed minimum salary of \$50,000 may not be enough to attract and retain highly qualified professionals with advanced degrees. Recruiting and retaining such individuals requires a salary that is significantly higher than the minimum proposed in the legislation.

I firmly believe that a strong education system is essential to the success of our state. This system must prepare our children to pursue higher education in their chosen fields.

Achieving this objective requires that we invest in our educators by providing them with fair compensation for the important work they do.

Thank you for your time,

***Gary Merrill***  
***Chief Executive Officer***  
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*North Berwick, ME 03906*  
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