



## MASSABESIC CENTER FOR ADULT LEARNING

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Thursday, April 13, 2023

Senator Rafferty, Representative Brennan and Members of the Committee on Educational and Cultural Affairs:

#### TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF LD 1367

My name is Adam Goad. I serve on the Maine Adult Education Association's Board of Directors, and work as an adult education director for RSU 57. I am testifying in support of LD 1367.

Many adult education programs have difficulty fulfilling their mission due to a lack of useable funds. This committee may understandably wonder why the grant money made available through the Maine College and Career Access program is not being used to fund additional support. The answer can be found by getting to know our students.

Adult education programs serve a wide range of individuals, many of whom are marginalized, and many who have dealt with significant trauma and adverse experiences over the course of their lives. When they come to us, these individuals very often do not have the academic background nor emotional wherewithal to pursue the higher level academic content and career planning services for which the MCCA grant is intended. For many of our students, following through on their decision to pursue their high school credential is itself a huge undertaking.

These learners will go on to more advanced learning when they are ready. Often grant funds have a finite start and end date to spend and aren't "in the right place at the right time" to meet learner needs. Adult education funds need an increase in subsidy so that programs can use academic funds where they are most needed, when they are most needed. Learner needs fluctuate depending on the economy and the community. Given the breadth of programming that is expected from adult education (from learning to read to preparing for college entrance and a job) subsidy funding gives programs the most flexibility to meet learner needs.

I see individuals everyday who have overcome enormous obstacles to be present and ready to learn. For many of them, the bottom rung of the career/learning ladder is just outside of their reach. With adequate funding through state subsidy, adult education programs can put these individuals on a path to success and allow them to become engaged and contributing members of their local communities.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Adam Goad

Director

Massabesic Center for Adult Learning