



**Maine Education Association**  
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**Testimony**  
**Neither for Nor Against**  
**LD 254: An Act to Update the Sex Education and Consent Curriculum**  
**Before the Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs**  
**January 09, 2024**

Senator Rafferty, Representative Brennan, and other esteemed members of the Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs,

My name is Mallory Cook (pronouns she/her/hers), and I am the Director of Training and Early Educator Engagement at the Maine Education Association and a certified English teacher and Building Administrator. On behalf of MEA, I am writing to provide testimony neither for nor against LD 254: An Act to Update the Sex Education and Consent Curriculum.

As articulated in the concept draft, adequate training and support for educators is essential in delivering Comprehensive Sexual Education in our schools. Despite this, Health educators are not required to take courses offered on this topic in their educator preparatory programs. The same is true of Physical Education teachers, who are often assigned to teach these courses, without the prerequisite knowledge and skills.

While this bill seeks to provide more professional development opportunities for those in these roles, we believe a better alternative, that would help to resolve the root of this issue, would be to review the educator preparatory programs and requirements for Health and Physical Education degrees and to consider adding Comprehensive Sexual Education as a requirement for state certification for these endorsements. This solution will lessen the demand that has been put upon organizations like Maine Family Planning, will ensure those entering the field and taking on these important roles will be equipped with the knowledge and skills needed, and will require far less funding to achieve.

Thank you for your time, and I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

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