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Testimony of Debra McIntyre, Executive Director, on behalf of the members of the Maine Curriculum Leaders Association, testifying neither for nor against LD 2001 An Act to Establish the African American Studies Advisory Council and Require Funding for African American Studies

Senator Rafferty, Representative Brennan, and members of the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee, my name is Debra McIntyre, and I am the Executive Director of the Maine Curriculum Leaders Association. On behalf of the 97 public school districts across the state represented by our membership, MCLA, I am testifying neither for nor against LD 2001 An Act to Establish the African American Studies Advisory Council and Require Funding for African American Studies.

The standards outlined in the Maine Learning Results guide the curriculum development process that is completed at the local level. The State of Maine does not have a state required curriculum and each school district develops their own. While we support material creation and professional development around African American Studies, and the inclusion in the Maine Learning Results we cannot support the added burden of completing curriculum audits. A thorough curriculum audit is a time-consuming task and would be an undue burden on some districts. MCLA supports more resources and materials for school districts to use in implementing the learning results and providing the field with these resources and training as they are essential for successfully implementing standards related to African American studies.

In December of 2022, LD 1664, PL 2022, Chapter 247, directed the Department of Education to Integrate African American Studies into American History Education. As a result, recommendations were made including collaborating with the field to amplify the resources and materials that integrate Maine's Black history and to develop on-going support for educators. We believe these recommendations should be reviewed with the goal of continuously working towards achieving the recommendations from the advisory committee.

MCLA is neither for nor against LD 2001. - Thank you for your time.