

Lauren Tarantino
Cape Elizabeth
LD 2131

Senator Rafferty, Representative Brennan, and Members of the Joint Standing
Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs:

My name is Lauren Tarantino. I live in Portland and work in Cape Elizabeth, and I am
writing in support of L.D. 2131,
An Act to Support Extended Learning Opportunities.

I have been a public school teacher for seventeen years. I am now the Extended
Learning Opportunities Coordinator at Cape Elizabeth High School, but prior to this
year, I was an English teacher for my entire teaching career. The impact I have seen
on my students this year with their work in the ELO program has shown me the true
power of letting students have more ownership over their learning experiences and the
value of connecting students' learning to real life. My students shared that they
learned more in their ELO class than they have in any other class in high school, that
they learned skills and content that will stay with them for the rest of their lives, and
that they learned because they wanted to, not because they felt forced to. The
learning experiences students have through ELOs are relevant, engaging, authentic,
and motivating. Many students shared that their ELO class made it easier for them to
come to school each day, and that it also helped them perform better in their other
classes. ELOs should be valued just like any other class or learning experience. I say
this from the perspective of someone who worked in a regular content classroom for
many years.

Please support Extended Learning Opportunities.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Lauren Tarantino
ELO Coordinator
Cape Elizabeth High School