

The Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs  
Testimony from Margaret Angell, Head of Partnerships and Strategic Initiatives  
The Roux Institute, Northeastern University

In support of

LD 2118

An Act to Provide Funding to the Maine School of Science and Mathematics President Troy Jackson -  
Proposed Amendment

13 February 2024

Senator Rafferty, Representative Brennan, and distinguished members of the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee, my name is Margaret Angell and I am the Head of Partnerships and Strategic Initiatives at Northeastern University's Roux Institute. I write in strong support for ongoing funding to the Maine School of Science and Mathematics (MSSM), which is a unique and valued asset in Maine's STEM education ecosystem.

Founded in 2020, the primary mission of the Roux Institute at Northeastern University is to help grow Maine's economy by cultivating advanced talent, innovation, and new ventures in the technology and life sciences sectors. We work in deep collaboration with industry, higher education, K12, non-profit, and government partners for economic impact. In doing so, we seek to decrease the gap between education and professional practice, ensuring that we develop the important talent needed to address the global economic and societal challenges of today and the future.

Today, the Roux Institute has 725 graduate learners currently studying for advanced degrees and we have over two hundred alumni. In addition, over 1,600 employees of our corporate partners have taken courses with us as part of employer-sponsored learning. Since our launch four years ago, we have awarded \$27.5m in scholarships, brought \$20m in research funding to the State, incubated 65 start-ups, and our team now numbers more than 165.

We operate with a foundational philosophy that talent and ambition are everywhere, but opportunity is not, especially opportunities in the technology and life sciences sectors. So while our degree programs are at the graduate level, we – and many of our partners – recognize the importance of working with all our partners to cultivate a robust and intentional "K to Gray" science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) pipeline. It is for this reason that I would like to express my strong support for ongoing funding for MSSM to continue its critical mission for the state of Maine.

Our support of MSSM is in alignment with our initiatives in K12 where we aim to support hundreds of Maine's students increase their access and engagement in STEM fields and careers. To that end, we collaborate with many schools and K12 organizations to provide faculty, space, curriculum, and other resources to increase student awareness and engagement in STEM. MSSM serves students from across the state who want to pursue a rigorous STEM high school curriculum. Notably, MSSM provides powerful opportunities for Maine's rural youth and graduates advanced students in STEM, which Maine's economy needs to thrive. We are committed to supporting MSSM through our community partnerships.

Supporting MSSM contributes to our state's ambition to increase opportunities and prepare our young people to seize those opportunities. This is an essential mission for our community, and we hope you will support this unique and valued school.