

TESTIMONY OF DANIEL W. WALKER
ON BEHALF OF MAINE INDEPENDENT COLLEGES ASSOCIATION

**In opposition to LD 1532, An Act to Protect Maine's Air Quality by Strengthening
Requirements for Air Emissions Licensing**

**Joint Standing Committee on the Environment and Natural Resources
May 5, 2021**

Senator Brenner, Representative Tucker, and members of the Environment and Natural Resources Committee, my name is Daniel Walker, and I am an attorney with Preti Flaherty and I am here today on behalf of the Maine Independent Colleges Association (MICA) to testify in opposition to LD 1532.

MICA represents 11 private, nonprofit colleges and universities¹ throughout Maine that serve over 25,000 students, over 7,000 of whom are from Maine. These institutions are located in municipalities of all sizes across the State, from Maine's largest city to small tourist towns and farming communities. Collectively, the 11 institutions are an economic force and an integral part of Maine's Higher Educational eco-system. While they share the attributes of being private and nonprofit, these institutions are highly diverse and serve very different aspects of the educational needs of Maine people. Together they provide nearly \$55 million in financial aid to Maine students.

MICA institutions work every day to make their campuses more environmentally friendly, conscious, and sustainable. LD 1532 may have been the result of good intentions, but it is unworkable.

MICA's higher education institutions are very concerned with the impact of this legislation. These institutions have air emissions licenses granted by the Maine Department of Environmental Protection that would be affected by the changes proposed in this bill. Section 5 of this bill prohibits a licensed source from locating in an area zoned for residential use or within 1000 feet of a residence. Our college campuses have various air emission licenses, and the location of dorms and other residential facilities also on these campuses would have the effect of causing these licenses to be prohibited, and therefore not renewed.

Additionally, this bill would drastically increase civil penalties for civil violations of air emissions standards from a minimum of \$100/day to a minimum of \$25,000/day, which could result in astronomical fines for simply late reports.

MICA urges this committee to vote "ought not to pass" on LD 1532.

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¹ Bates College, Bowdoin College, Colby College, College of the Atlantic, Husson University, Maine College of Art, Roux Institute at Northeastern University, St. Joseph's College of Maine, Thomas College, Unity College, and University of New England.