

Written Testimony: Committee on Innovation, Development, Economic Advancement and Business

Re: LD 632: *An Act to Amend the Social Work Education Loan Repayment Program*

Chairpersons Curry and Roberts, and members of the Committee on Innovation, Development, Economic Advancement and Business,

I am a first generation college student at the University of Maine in support of LD 632. I am expected to graduate with my Bachelor of Social Work degree in May 2023. I am a resident of Howland, but currently live in Orono for school. I am a full-time student while also interning at the Department of Health and Human Services and working a part-time job. At this time, I owe approximately 30K in student loans and am concerned as to how I am going to be able to pay this back. I have a strong desire to further my education by attending graduate school but am unsure if I will be able to do so due to financial insecurity. I come from a low-income background, therefore, I am solely responsible for my debt and do not receive any financial assistance from family members. Although I receive SNAP benefits which enables me to afford groceries, I still struggle to make ends meet. My current income is not sufficient to cover all of my essential monthly expenses such as rent, utilities, car insurance, gasoline, etc. This greatly hinders my ability to provide for myself and also limits the work that I will be able to do with my degree.

Social workers play a crucial role in the overall functioning of society. The passing of this bill would greatly benefit current social workers, as well as future one's such as myself, and allow them to better serve our community. Because of this, I urge you all to vote "Yes" on LD 632. Thank you for considering.

Respectfully submitted,

Madison Lavin  
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University of Maine  
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Howland  
LD 632

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Advancement and Business

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