

TO: The Honorable Michael Tipping
The Honorable Amy Roeder, Co-Chairs
Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Labor

DATE: March 18th, 2025

RE: LD 112, An Act to Promote Opportunities by Establishing a Student Wage

Dear Senator Tipping and Representative Roeder,

My name is Rekha Goonesekere. I'm a resident of Augusta. I am testifying today as a member of LWVME's Youth Council. This program helps young people to explore how Maine's government works and build their civic leadership skills. This testimony does not represent LWVME's view only those of the Youth Council. I am testifying ought not to pass on LD 112.

As a high school student who works two food service jobs, it is important to get paid fairly for the work that I do. Reducing the minimum wage for students diminishes and demeans the value of our time and hard work. It would be unjust and extremely discouraging as an employee to earn half of what my adult coworkers make for doing the same job. Many students, including myself, work to earn money for college savings, transportation, and more. This bill would force already hardworking students to have to do twice as much work to earn the money they need, detracting from time spent on school and working toward their future. Furthermore, it would disproportionately impact lower income students, who rely on their jobs to pay for necessities that their parents may not be able to provide.