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TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO

L.D. 1279

AN ACT TO INCREASE THE MINIMUM WAGE

Senator Hickman, Representative Sylvester, and members of the Labor and Housing Committee. I am Steven Bailey, executive director of Maine School Management Association, testifying on behalf of the legislative committees of the Maine School Boards Association and Maine School Superintendents Association in opposition to L.D. 1279.

Our members have the same problem with this legislation as we do with L.D. 734. It ultimately raises the minimum wage to \$16 an hour, and there are parts of the state that can't afford it. This bill has another concerning aspect in that it raises minimum wage for everyone, including our local business owners, whom we rely on to support schools.

As you all know, some Maine communities have very different economic realities than in our more rural parts of the state. And, in all communities, there are people who are getting dangerously close to being taxed out of their homes due to substantial increases in property values over the last year.

We are an aging state. So-called empty-nesters still support public education, and we thank them. If we add onto already rising costs for education, including the needed ramp up to a minimum salary of \$40,000 for teachers in 2022, we risk losing them.