

Lois Kilby-Chesley
Durham, ME
LD 112

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To Labor and Housing Committee
From Lois Kilby-Chesley

Senator Tipping, Representative Roeder and esteemed members of the Labor and Housing Committee.

My name is Lois Kilby-Chesley, and I am writing to you from my home in Durham, ME.

I am writing in support of LD 112 - An Act to Increase the State's Share of Retired Teacher Health Insurance.

I loved my career in education, but honestly, the financial impacts of my career choice continue to haunt me in retirement. The MEPERS check I receive along with the Social Security check that is reduced through the GPO/WEP fiasco, means I make tough financial choices every day. If a few more dollars were available from the State's contribution to health insurance, the choices might be a little easier.

There was a time when the State had a goal of 100% payment for teacher health insurance. Unfortunately between the good intentions and now, the state share stuck at 45% for years before recently increasing to 55%.

What we retired teachers need now is for the State to begin to make good on the 20 year old promise to move toward paying 100% of health insurance. The first step would be to move in 5% increments from 55%. In 2023 on July 1, that means raising to 60%, 65% in July 2024, and so on until we reach 100%. Health care is not just a necessity, in my opinion, it is a right.

I made a promise to teach my students to the best of my ability, to protect them and nurture them, to help them become engaged citizens with the skills to be successful adults. The State should also be keeping the promise it made two decades ago.

Thank you for the work you do for teachers and all residents of our State.