



49 Community Drive, Augusta, ME 04330
Telephone: (207) 622-3473 Fax: (207) 626-2968
Website: www.msmaweb.com



TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO

L.D. 1376

AN ACT TO CREATE A LIVABLE WAGE BY INCREASING THE MINIMUM HOURLY WAGE

Senator Tipping, Representative Roeder and members of the Committee on Labor and Housing. 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. 1376.

This bill sets the minimum wage at \$15 per hour in 2024 and requires it go up \$1 per year, starting in 2025 through 2033, or by the increase in the cost of living, whichever is greater.

By our estimates the \$1 per-year requirement would bring us to \$25 per year in 10 years, for our employees who get an hourly rate. As you know teacher salaries are negotiated, as well as wages for many education technicians IIIs.

School districts are well aware of the competitive nature of the current job market, which is driving up hourly rates in parts of the state.

We have particular concerns with a mandated hourly rate for school employees in our more rural districts. In those districts where our taxpayers are earning less than in urban districts, it could cause school budgets to fail.

We also are concerned that this mandates a significant cost driver in local school budgets. Those budgets are the purview of the local School Board and ultimately local taxpayers, whose tax rates would be affected.

L.D. 1376 goes against local control and we urge its defeat.