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**Testimony of Rep. Seth Berry before the
Joint Standing Committee on State and Local Government
In Qualified Opposition To LD 158,
An Act To Eliminate Inactive Boards and Commissions**

Senator Baldacci, Representative Matlack and distinguished members of the State and Local Government Committee, my name is Seth Berry. I live in Bowdoinham and I represent House District 55. I appear in qualified opposition to LD 158, because I do not support the elimination of the State Education and Employment Outcomes Task Force.

This Task Force was created by my bill in 2014, which passed after emerging unanimously from the Joint Select Committee on Maine's Workforce and Economic Future, where I served as House Chair. I was privileged to serve on the SEEO for two years. We did some amazing work thanks to some great members, pulling in federal money and helping to guide and oversee the creation of [Maine EARNNS](#), a groundbreaking platform to help students, employers, and our higher education system track employment results and make more informed decisions.

Following that period, there was a failure for several years to make key appointments to the SEEO. This stalled the work, and it has been mothballed since. However, I am pleased to say that our new Speaker and Senate President have decided that the work of the SEEO has value and have appointed new members.

This is a great time to restart the efforts of this important Task Force. The state has recently received a \$3.5M grant to overhaul our Student Longitudinal Data System (SLDS). Reconvening the SEEO may help bring relevance and oversight to this important work, while also potentially helping to add legitimacy.

Today you will also receive written testimony from the University of Maine system asking that you not repeal this section of statute.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. I would be happy to answer any questions.

Proudly representing House District 55: Bowdoin, Bowdoinham, most of
Richmond, and beautiful Swan Island on the Kennebec