



STATE OF MAINE
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
SPEAKER'S OFFICE
AUGUSTA, MAINE 04333-0002
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RYAN M. FECTEAU
SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE

April 6, 2021

Re: Testimony in Support of L.D 1010. An Act To Establish the Maine Service Fellows Program.

Senator Baldacci, Representative Matlack, and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on State and Local Government, I am Ryan Fecteau and I represent part of my hometown of Biddeford. I have the distinct honor of serving as the Speaker of the Maine House. Today, I am proud to support L.D. 1010. An Act To Establish the Maine Service Fellows Program.

This bill addresses an issue that Maine communities struggle with: young people are leaving Maine after graduation. This isn't a new problem, but L.D. 1010 could be a new way to solve it.

There are many communities who would benefit from having Maine people supporting them in health and human services initiatives, public safety projects, educational and environmental needs.

An Act To Establish the Maine Service Fellows Program would encourage Mainers to provide at least one year of service to Maine's underserved and rural communities in these areas, strengthening civic engagement of both the program fellows and community residents.

Service programs in Maine typically generate \$3 in return investments. This means a \$350,000 investment to the Maine Service Fellows program could bring a return investment of \$1,050,000 by the second year of operation. The Maine Service Fellows program could provide long-term benefits to our communities that exceed program costs.

This program could qualify for American Rescue Plan funds or Volunteer Maine can receive both private and federal funds and grants to fund the program.

This program also offers pathways for individuals to consider public service as a career and experience psychological benefits of being part of a community's success. According to the [American Psychological Association \(APA\)](#), individuals who enter into public service careers experience personal fulfillment when their work and career connects to one's life mission.

As we have seen with the devastating effects of COVID-19 in Maine and in our nation, the more talent and skill-building we bring to Maine to our recovery, the stronger we will be going forward. The program could give Maine people of all ages who face a difficult job market at any time a productive focus and purpose as they contribute their time and talent to community recovery.

I urge the committee to support L.D. 1010.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ryan Fecteau".

Ryan M. Fecteau
Speaker of the House