



**maineaeYC**

Maine Association for the  
Education of Young Children

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Testimony of Tara Williams

On behalf of the Maine Association for the Education of Young Children (MaineAEYC)  
Before the Joint Standing Committee On State and Local Governments, in support of

*LD1034: An Act To Provide Funding To Support the Permanent Commission on the Status of  
Racial, Indigenous and Maine Tribal Populations*

April 14th, 2021

Senator Baldacci, Representative Matlack, and distinguished members of the State and Local Governments Committee, the Maine Association for the Education of Young Children (MaineAEYC) supports LD 1034. MaineAEYC thinks it is important for our state to support the Permanent Commission on the Status of Racial, Indigenous and Maine Tribal Populations with funding for staff so that their essential work can continue and grow. We know that the work of this Commission will help Maine gain insight into the racial disparities children face in Maine, the current barriers to having a strong start in life, and the opportunities to build systems of equity for families in our state.

We are an affiliate of the National Association for the Education of Young Children. We are proud to support “Advancing Equity in Early Childhood Education.” It is one the five foundational documents and position statements of NAEYC.

*Advancing equity in early childhood education requires understanding this broader societal context, these biases, and the ways in which historical and current inequities have shaped the profession, as they have shaped our nation. The biases we refer to here are based on race, class, culture, gender, sexual orientation, ability and disability, language, national origin, indigenous heritage, religion, and other identities. They are rooted in our nation’s social, political, economic, and educational structures. Precisely because these biases are both individual and institutional, addressing structural inequities requires attention to both interpersonal dynamics—the day-to-day relationships and interactions at the core of early childhood education practice—and systemic influences—the uneven distribution of power and privilege inherent in public and private systems nationwide, including in early childhood education.*

<https://www.naeyc.org/resources/position-statements/equity-purpose>

We need to address historical, generational, and systemic disparities and support equity right from the start.