

Siad Shaleh
Lewiston
LD 724

Testimony in Support of LD 724 – An Act to Recognize Eid Al-Fitr and Eid Al-Adha as State Holidays

Honorable Members of the Committee,

I stand in strong support of LD 724, An Act to Recognize Eid Al-Fitr and Eid Al-Adha as State Holidays. This bill represents an important step toward promoting inclusivity, respect, and equality for all communities in Maine.

Eid Al-Fitr and Eid Al-Adha are not just religious holidays; they are moments of great significance for the Muslim community in Maine and around the world. Eid Al-Fitr marks the end of Ramadan, a month of fasting, self-discipline, and prayer, while Eid Al-Adha commemorates the sacrifice and devotion of the Prophet Ibrahim. For millions of Muslims, these holidays are times of spiritual reflection, communal prayer, and charity.

Recognizing these days as state holidays will not only give proper acknowledgment to the Muslim community but also ensure that all Mainers can observe these sacred times without fear of work or school conflicts. It would allow Muslim families the opportunity to celebrate together, worship, and participate in cultural traditions, free from the limitations imposed by a workweek or school calendar.

Moreover, this bill reflects the values of equity and inclusion that our state holds dear. As Maine continues to grow in diversity, it is crucial that our state's policies reflect and respect the traditions and cultures of all communities. Recognizing Eid Al-Fitr and Eid Al-Adha as state holidays will send a clear message that Maine is a place where all people, regardless of their background or faith, are valued and respected. This is a matter of fairness. When we make space for religious observances, we honor the core principles of freedom and respect that unite us as a state. By passing LD 724, we can demonstrate that Maine is a place where everyone is welcome, and everyone's faith is acknowledged.

I urge you to support this bill and take a strong stand for inclusivity and respect for religious diversity in Maine.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Siad Shaleh
Lewiston/Auburn Islamic Center