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## TESTIMONY REGARDING

L.D. 62

### AN ACT TO REQUIRE ANTIPINCH SENSORS ON SCHOOL BUS DOORS

Senator Chipman, Representative Williams and members of the Transportation Committee. I am Victoria Wallack, director of communications and government relations for Maine School Management Association, testifying on behalf of the legislative committees of the Maine School Boards Association and Maine School Superintendents Association regarding L.D. 62 – MSBA is neither for nor against and MSSA is in support.

School buses are one of the safest ways for children to get to and from school, but accidents can still happen. Every year, there are numerous injuries and unfortunately deaths that occur involving school transportation-related accidents, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA).

Antipinch sensors are designed to monitor for safety and alert drivers when the opening isn't safe. One such common accident is a child becoming stuck in a bus door. If a child's finger, arm, or backpack becomes trapped in the door, the driver may not be aware and drive off potentially causing serious injury. As soon as a finger or any other object is detected, the sensor stops the closing movement of the door, prevents the bus from moving forward and helps to avoid a serious injury. Antipinch sensors will stop such accidents from happening.

The concerns our organizations have are two-fold: if this passes, will it become an unfunded mandate and need to be included on all future purchases for buses; and is the intent of the bill to provide these safety devices on newly purchased buses or to retrofit all buses? Further clarification is needed. We encourage the sponsors to seek appropriate means of funding this bill so all schools can install the sensors without financial hardship.