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Testimony
In Support of

LD 1589 Resolve, Directing the Department of Education to Adopt Rules Prohibiting Teachers in Public Schools from Engaging in Political, Ideological and Religious Advocacy in the Classroom.

Good Afternoon Senator Rafferty, Representative Brennan and members of the Education and Cultural Affairs committee. My name is Katrina Smith and I represent District 62; China, Palermo, Somerville, Windsor and Hibberts Gore. I am here today to present **LD 1589 Resolve, Directing the Department of Education to Adopt Rules Prohibiting Teachers in Public Schools from Engaging in Political, Ideological and Religious Advocacy in the Classroom.**

Frankly, I find it incredibly difficult to write this testimony. Why was it so hard you might ask? Because to me this bill is so obvious that it should be in statute that I find it unbelievable that I have to convince you to pass it.

The purpose of this resolve for K-12 Teachers, is to restore the basic principles of public education in a democracy, and to prevent teachers from inserting partisan politics into their teaching. The purpose of the resolve is not to create “balance” in the classroom. “Balance” is a vague concept and provides a loophole— an “I mentioned the other side”— for teachers to continue to use the classroom to indoctrinate students.

The purpose of this resolve is not to solve “bias.” All individuals have biases. The Resolve is about preventing K-12 classrooms from becoming partisan political platforms, and to keep their captive youthful audiences from being victims of partisan political indoctrination by their teachers.

Since the beginnings of public education in the United States, it has been assumed that in a democracy teachers should teach children how to think, not tell them what to think. If teachers use their authority to impose their personal political views on America’s youth, our democracy will not survive.

This resolve says teacher should not endorse, support, or oppose any political candidate. It says that a teacher should not endorse support or oppose any pending proposed or enacted legislation, it prohibits a teacher from introducing any controversial subject matter that is not germane to the topic of the course being taught or that advocating in a partisan manner for any side of a controversial issue requires a teacher to provide students with materials, supporting both sides of that issue.

These points all sound completely reasonable and they make complete sense that your child would go to school to learn and not be influenced. You have to ask yourself why has this resolved has not been pass before.

I have no idea why this bill is seen as protecting only certain religious or conservative viewpoints! I have no idea why the Maine Educational Association does not support this legislation! This resolve protects EVERY viewpoint because it keeps every personal opinion out of the classroom. I ask you to vote Ought to Pass on LD 1589 and get back to educating our children.

Thank you.