

Call to Action on Climate Education

LD 1902 A Resolve, To Establish a Pilot Program To Encourage Climate Education in Maine Public Schools

LD 1902 A Resolve, To Establish a Pilot Program To Encourage Climate Education in Maine Public Schools will provide much-needed support to help Maine teachers meet standards and best serve their students. It will fund climate education professional development for teachers and partnerships between schools and community organizations.

Why is climate education policy urgent today?

- 1 Students and teachers need support now.**
As the pandemic stretches on, teachers and students need support for their mental and physical well-being. Most climate education takes place outdoors and with community partners - proven ways to meet academic and social and emotional development needs in these trying times. Helping youth feel like they can make a difference is a powerful tool to combat common feelings of hopelessness.
- 2 Maine schools need equitable access to federal funding opportunities.**
Maine schools can access federal funding to support climate education, but only if they have the resources and capacity to do so. By supporting climate education community partnerships with under-resourced school districts, Maine schools will be better positioned to bring additional federal funds to where they are needed most.
- 3 Maine workforce development efforts depend on a well-prepared education pipeline.**
Efforts to build a green economy begin with young people inspired to pursue new career paths. Climate education is a strong foundation for youth to choose a career connected to Maine's natural resources - in agriculture, fishing, and forestry, science and engineering, renewable energy, and other key industries.
- 4 Maine teachers need support to meet state educational requirements.**
Since Maine adopted Next Generation Science Standards in 2019, teachers have called for professional development support in teaching to the standards, which include numerous climate education standards. As Maine continues to develop educational resources for Maine teachers in 2021, the lack of professional development has become a significant barrier to meeting these standards.
- 5 The 'Maine Won't Wait' Climate Action Plan recommends action now on climate education.**
Maine's Climate Action Plan set Maine on a course toward significant efforts to address climate risks in our state. LD 1902 is one of the only actions currently on the table that would advance 'Maine Won't Wait' climate action goals.

What will A Resolve, To Establish a Pilot Program To Encourage Climate Education in Maine Public Schools do?

While some students in Maine learn about the changing climate in school, many students lack access to climate change education because of a lack of resources and supports. While Maine moves forward into strong leadership on climate change and a new green economy, we cannot leave these youth behind. See reverse side for details.

In order to ensure that all Maine youth are prepared to lead Maine into an uncertain future, we must provide the essential support that Maine teachers have called for.

LD 1902, Resolve, To Establish a Pilot Program To Encourage Climate Education in Maine Public Schools will provide support for climate change education in schools in two ways:

1

Funds for professional development in K-12 interdisciplinary climate change education

In the [2019 Statewide Census of Community-based Environmental Learning](#), educators identified climate change education as their highest priority for professional development support. Additionally, many educators have pointed to a lack of training as a significant barrier to meeting the climate education standards that are part of the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) adopted in 2019. K-12 schools and educators will be eligible for grants for climate education training support to meet NGSS climate science standards, as well as training in teaching climate change in other disciplines such as social studies and history.

2

Funds for partnerships between schools and community organizations

The 2019 Statewide Census of Community-based Environmental Learning found that when schools partner with community organizations, students thrive and are better able to absorb and retain subject matter. Schools have long partnered with community-organizations to bridge gaps in training and familiarity with curriculum content and to engage students in new ways. All schools should have access to impactful climate education partnerships. Grant funds would be made available to support schools in bringing in experienced community partners to collaborate in preparing educators to teach climate science and interdisciplinary climate education.

As current and future leaders of our state, all Maine students deserve quality climate education to build their future upon.



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