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TO: Senate President Troy Jackson and House Speaker Ryan Fecteau

FROM: Maine School Boards Association
Maine School Superintendents Association

DATE: May 26, 2021

RE: Right to Strike and Binding Arbitration

Our organizations represent School Boards and Superintendents from across the state and are writing to ask that you oppose your own bill, L.D. 677. It would allow teachers to strike and put decisions around teacher salaries, pensions and insurance into the hands of outside arbitrators – a move we believe will only increase those costs that are ultimately paid for by state and local taxpayers.

We believe opposition to teacher strikes is shared by many parents and caregivers, who are just now feeling optimistic that schools will be open full-time in the fall. Children need to be with their teachers and parents and caregivers need to get back to their work and daily routines.

We also believe that local property taxpayers, if they were informed about what is going on in Augusta, would be strongly opposed to L.D. 677. It takes decisions around significant cost drivers in the school budget out of the hands of locally elected School Boards and into the hands of outside arbitrators. Arbitrators don't answer to taxpayers and have no stake in the communities whose property taxpayers fund schools.

Our associations thank you for your leadership during a difficult year and believe legislators, regardless of party, want what's best for our students and local communities. L.D. 677 does not represent those interests, and we urge its defeat.