

February 5, 2009

The Honorable Justin L. Alford, Senate Chair  
The Honorable Patricia B. Sutherland, House Chair  
Joint Standing Committee on Education & Cultural Affairs  
Room 202, Cross State Office Building  
Augusta, Maine 04330

**RE: L.D. 136, AN ACT TO REQUIRE THE PROVISION OF UNSTRUCTURED  
RECESS TIME FOR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS**

Dear Senator Alford, Representative Sutherland, and Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Education & Cultural Affairs:

I am writing on behalf of the Maine Medical Association (MMA) and the Maine Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics in support of L.D. 136. The MMA is a professional organization of more than 3000 Maine physicians, residents, and medical students whose mission is “to support Maine physicians, advance the quality of medicine in Maine, and promote the health of all Maine citizens.” The Maine Chapter of the AAP represents Maine physicians who specialize in the treatment of children and adolescents.

Policy initiatives to address obesity and its related health issues remain a high priority for the MMA Public Health Committee and for the Maine Chapter of the AAP. The Maine Legislature has devoted considerable energy to examining the obesity problem and developing a plan to address it through the 121<sup>st</sup> Legislature’s *Commission to Study Public Health* (Resolves 2003, Chapter 95) and the 123<sup>rd</sup> Legislature’s *PE4ME* (Resolves 2007, Chapter 102) initiatives. Maine physicians urge the 124<sup>th</sup> Maine Legislature to take decisive action to address the obesity problem through bills such as L.D. 136. Medical and public health organizations have issued many policy statements on obesity and physical activity. I have enclosed as background just one – the AAP’s 2006 Policy Statement, *Active Healthy Living: Prevention of Childhood Obesity Through Increased Physical Activity*. I have highlighted a section of the statement entitled, *Physical Activity in Schools* on page 1836 and another entitled, *Age Appropriate Recommendations for Physical Activity/Elementary School-Aged Children (6-9 Years)* on page 1838 that are particularly relevant to this bill.

Thank you for considering the views of Maine physicians on L.D. 136.

Sincerely,

Andrew B. MacLean

Enclosure