

Maine Lawmakers Need to Hear from You!

Guide to Testifying

Your voice and your story make a difference in securing the will of the voters by preserving Question 2 – the initiative that passed in November to fully fund our schools by asking the wealthiest Mainers to pay a little more. Public hearings provide an opportunity for you to offer input, share your story, and talk about the impact of potential policy changes on you and your family.

This guide to testifying contains information for those planning to testify on the 5 proposals to repeal Question 2. The most important thing is that you **focus on sharing why you support Question 2 – better funded schools and tax fairness.**

Directions:

The Taxation Committee hearing room is located in Room 127 in the State House Building. Please allow extra time to pass through security screening at the entrance of the building. When you arrive at the hearing room be sure to sign up to testify.

Public Hearing Procedures:

- ***Order of Testimony*** - The committee chair will open the public hearing. Bill sponsors will speak first, then the public in this order: those favoring the bill, those against the bill, and those neither for nor against but who wish to offer information about the bill.
- ***Your turn at the podium*** - When it is your turn to testify, proceed to the podium and sign in. Begin your testimony by saying: “Honorable Senator Dow, Representative Tipping, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Taxation.” Then introduce yourself. Say where you live and share your story about why repealing the results of Question 2 matter to you. When you finish, remain at the podium to answer questions.

Tips:

- **Keep your testimony to 3 minutes.** To ensure all voices are heard, time limits are enforced.
- **If you can, write your testimony and bring 20 copies.** That way, it will become part of the public record and will be available to committee members who are not present. Your written testimony can be as long as you like. If you can't write it, it's OK. You can still speak. If you like, send copies of your testimony to info@mecep.org and we can make copies for you.
- **Be polite and respectful.** Testimony is public record, streamed online, and often quoted in the media. Speaking clearly and politely helps legislators and the media focus on the important story you have to tell.
- **Tell your story and stick to the facts.** Public hearings are opportunities for legislators to hear Mainers explain how legislative proposals impact them. So tell your story. Explain how proposed policy changes will impact you personally.