



Press Release
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Senate Republican vote defies will of voters, compromises current and future school funding to give tax cuts to wealthy

Augusta (June 13, 2017) - The Maine Center for Economic Policy issued the following statement from policy analyst Sarah Austin in response to the Senate vote on a budget today that would eliminate the education surcharge, underfunding Maine schools and giving a huge tax cut to the wealthiest Mainers.

"Mainers approved a way to pay for education that leveled the playing field of our tax code and is sustainable in future years. The Republican Senate proposal, which is a massive tax cut for wealthy Mainers and a return to a cycle of crisis budgeting, undercuts school funding and shifts costs onto property taxpayers. There is no reason to come up short on something as essential as public education funding, especially when voters just approved a better way.

"In contrast, the House Democratic proposal, which passed 81 to 64 on Monday, would preserve voters' directive - that the state should meet its obligation to fund public schools and that asking the wealthy to pay more is the best way to achieve that goal."

According to the Institute for Taxation and Economic Policy, repealing the citizen approved surcharge would give a \$16,300 tax break on average to the top 1% of Maine households and cost the state over \$300 million in school funding over current and future biennia.

Voters approved \$312 million more in funding for schools over the next biennium. The proposal voted on today would cut \$200 million from what voters approved and cast uncertainty on our ability to fully fund schools in future years.

About the Maine Center for Economic Policy

The Maine Center for Economic Policy is a nonpartisan policy research organization that provides citizens, policymakers, advocates, and media with credible and rigorous economic analysis that advances economic justice and prosperity for all Maine people.

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