

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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121<sup>st</sup> MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE  
LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

DAVID E. BOULTER  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

March 13, 2003

Jean K. Gulliver, Chair  
State Board of Education  
23 State House Station  
Augusta, ME 04333-0023

Re: Maine Education Policy Research Institute

Dear Chair Gulliver and Members of the State Board of Education:

Thank you for your memo of March 7, 2003 regarding the proposed change in funding for the Education Policy Research Institute that is recommended by the Legislative Council. It is very helpful to the Legislative Council to know of the board's concerns about the proposed change and the value the board places on the Institute's education data and information work. The Legislative Council, too, is supportive of the work of the Institute.

I want to clarify that the Legislative Council is not proposing to eliminate funds for the Education Research Institute or to abolish the Institute. Rather, the Legislative Council believes that the Institute's work is most appropriately funded, not from an annual appropriation to the Legislature, but from the General Purpose Aid to Education. You may recall that the Institute's original funding source was from the GPA when it was first established by the Legislature. As you might imagine, some recent proposals to the Council have called for the elimination of the Institute as a permanent budget savings measure, proposals that the Council rejected. The Council believes that a return to the original manner of funding the institute is appropriate in light of the current budget conditions, and provides the best assurance for long-term funding for the institute given the on-going pressures to reduce departmental budgets across state government.

The Legislature certainly recognizes the value of having current and accurate information on Maine education programs and initiatives and the role of the Maine Education Policy Research Institute in developing that valuable information. Once again, thank you for taking the time to write.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Beverly C. Daggett'.

Beverly C. Daggett, Chair  
121<sup>st</sup> Legislative Council

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John Elias Baldacci  
Governor

**STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION  
23 STATE HOUSE STATION  
AUGUSTA, MAINE 04333-0023**

Telephone (207) 624-6616

TO: David Boulter, Executive Director, Legislative Council  
Honorable Beverly C. Daggett, President of the Senate, Chair  
Honorable Patrick Colwell, Speaker of the House  
Honorable Sharon Anglin Treat, Senate Democratic Leader  
Honorable Kenneth Gagnon, Senate Asst. Democratic Leader  
Honorable Paul T. Davis, Sr., Senate Republican Leader  
Honorable Chandler Woodcock, Senate Asst. Republican Leader  
Honorable John Richardson, House Democratic Leader  
Honorable Robert W. Duplessie, House Asst. Democratic Leader  
Honorable Joseph Bruno, House Republican Leader  
Honorable David E. Bowles, House Asst. Republican Leader

FROM:  Jean K. Gulliver, Chair, State Board of Education  
Phil Dionne, Vice Chair, State Board of Education  
James E. Rier, Jr., Member, State Board of Education  
Ellie Multer, Member, State Board of Education  
Jack Norris, Member, State Board of Education  
Joyce McPhetres, Member, State Board of Education  
Weston L. Bonney, Member, State Board of Education  
Janet Tockman, Member, State Board of Education  
Kenneth Allen, Member, State Board of Education

DATE: March 7, 2003

SUBJECT: Maine Education Policy Research Institute (MEPRI)

The State Board of Education would like to address the issue of funding for the Maine Education Policy Research Institute. It is our understanding that the Council has proposed eliminating funds in the amount of \$150,000 per year in the Institute's proposed budget.

We strongly urge you to reconsider this proposal. In a time of such difficult decisions driven by a lagging economy and declining populations, the critical need for accurate data is undeniable.

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Maine Education Policy Research Institute (MEPRI) is the only source of such data and information. Maine Education Policy Research Institute was created because of the identified need for the legislature to have current and accurate information on which to base its decisions. At this time, when every dollar spent must be more effective than ever before, the work of the Institute is especially significant, giving the Legislature an opportunity to assure that monies appropriated for various education programs and initiatives are based on sound research rather than on the latest theories and speculations.

Please restore this funding to allow MEPRI's work to continue.

Thank you.