The 128th Legislature of the State of Maine
State House
Augusta, ME

Dear Honorable Members of the 128th Legislature:

Under the authority vested in me by Article IV, Part Third, Section 2 of the Constitution of the State of Maine, I am hereby vetoing LD 412, “Resolve, To Direct the Development of After-school Programs.”

This bill represents a classic bait-and-switch approach to legislation. The sponsor originally introduced a bill that would restore emphasis on home economics and industrial arts in our public schools. For all the money we spend on public education in Maine, I understand why supporters of the bill were interested in making sure Maine students develop life skills that enable them to be productive members of their households and the workforce.

During the legislative process, the bill was amended to direct the Department of Education to work with a specific nonprofit organization, which was designated in statute. The legislature did not fund this working group, creating an unfunded mandate for the Department.

Further, the workgroup is charged with designing and developing afterschool programs that the legislature can require schools to implement as part of the growing list of unfunded mandates, or they can come back to the public trough for more state funding for afterschool programs. However, these programs are only necessary because the legislature failed to ensure our public schools are using the school day to provide young Mainers with the skills they need to be effective in life.

Instead of solving a problem, this bill creates an unfunded workgroup that will leave even more problems unsolved.

For these reasons, I return LD 412 unsigned and vetoed. I strongly urge the Legislature to sustain it.

Sincerely,

Paul R. LePage
Governor