

**Testimony of Dr. Emily Copeland, Chair Portsmouth School Committee, in support of House Bill 8488**

**May 21, 2026**

Good evening Honorable Members of the House Committee on Finance.

My name is Dr. Emily Copeland, and I am Chair of the Portsmouth School Committee. I am submitting testimony in support of H8488 which, subject to voter approval, would allow the town of Portsmouth to issue general obligation bonds not to exceed \$41 million in support of school building maintenance and capital improvements.

We have currently concluded our last round of school improvement projects that were financed by an approximately \$21 million bond. All projects were completed on time and under budget. Both the School Committee and the Town Council have unanimously supported the submission of the Portsmouth School District's Stage II Capital Plan to RIDE this year.

I'd like to thank the Committee on Finance and ultimately the legislature in advance for supporting our local efforts to modernize school infrastructure and enhancing the public education of the residents of Portsmouth.

Thank you for listening.