



Ballot Question #2: STAND UP FOR STUDENTS — TALKING POINTS

Establishes a provision to support public education by taxing a 3% surcharge on the portion of any household income exceeding \$200,000 per year

Unitarian Universalist Principles:

- *First Principle: The inherent worth and dignity of every person*
 - *Fourth Principle: A free and responsible search for truth and meaning*
 - *Seventh Principle: Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part*
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What is Question 2, and what does it do?

The ballot question: "Do you want to add a 3% tax on individual Maine taxable income above \$200,000 to create a state fund that would provide direct support for student learning in kindergarten through 12th grade public education?"

In 2003, Maine voters (by a majority of 72%) passed a referendum calling immediately for the **state to pay for 55% of the cost of operating public schools**, as a way to reduce pressure on local property taxes. **That percentage has never been met.** To approach that target, **Stand Up for Students** has brought a ballot initiative to implement a 3% surcharge in Maine income taxes on the portion of any household income exceeding \$200,000 per year. *Michael Hillard, University of Southern Maine economics professor: "We're asking our top earners to pay a little bit more to help fund our most common and essential public good — the education of our children. This initiative is good for taxpayers and good for Maine."*

The proposed law requires that this money MUST be used for direct classroom instruction, including materials and equipment, as well as teachers, school nurses and other critical public school personnel.

The initiative supports public education and students' search for truth and meaning while supporting the dignity of students – even students who live in communities with fewer resources to support local public schools.

The initiative contributes to a strong economic future for all Mainers by supporting a well-educated workforce that will attract jobs to our state and allow our children to stay and succeed in Maine. Moreover, the proposal will support students' ability to make choices for their own lives and to contribute to family, civic, and community life.

The initiative recognizes that we are all responsible for the education of Maine's children and youth and thus relates to the interdependent web of existence.

Source: Stand Up for Students; Yes! On Question 2 <http://standupforstudentsmaine.org/>