

Good afternoon, Sen. Nangle, Rep. Stover, and members of the State & Local Government Committee.

I am Lawrence Lockman, co-founder & president of Maine First Project, and I am here today to speak in opposition to LD 2167.

Gov. Mills and many of the co-sponsors of LD 2167 have made a big deal of their desire to repeal the 6-month waiting period before so-called “asylum seekers” can seek employment in the United States. If LD 2167 is enacted, the Office of New Americans will be lobbying Maine’s congressional delegation to make that happen.

That waiting period was originally adopted by the Clinton administration – and then extended to a full year by the Trump administration – out of concern that some migrants might apply for asylum primarily as a means of getting a work authorization. Asylee status was never intended as a fast track to getting a job in the United States while your application is pending.

But that’s exactly what’s happened.

Statistics from the US Department of Justice indicate that out of every 100 aliens who claimed a credible fear of persecution between 2008 and 2019, only 14 were granted asylum.

Given that history, the waiting period for work permits made perfect sense under the Clinton, Bush, Obama, and Trump administrations. And it makes even more sense today under the Biden administration, with tens of thousands of non-citizens entering the country illegally every month across America’s wide-open southern border.

No serious person believes any of the aliens who ultimately lose their asylum claims will self-deport when that happens. They’re here to stay.

In any case, at least 90 percent of the approximately 10,000 “asylum seekers” who have settled in Maine since Janet Mills took office have

already been here for more than six months, making them eligible for the coveted work permits. How many of them have gone to work? Whatever the number is, it can't be very many, or the lobbyists at the Chamber of Commerce would stop complaining about the supposed workforce shortage.

Expedited work permits are just another magnet to attract economic migrants and incentivize them to file unwarranted asylum claims that will ultimately be rejected, by which time they will have blended into the population with no fear of deportation.

As for the supposed shortage of workers to fill jobs in Maine, count me among the skeptics. Maine's workforce participation rate is abysmally low. Fewer than six out of ten Mainers who could be working are actually working – evidence that our reputation as a welfare state where the safety net has turned into a hammock is well deserved. Anecdotally, there's plenty of evidence that the workforce is already here to fill jobs that pay more than entry-level wages.

Exhibit A: the Old Town paper mill in Penobscot County re-started in 2019 after a four-year shutdown. The new owners advertised to fill 130 positions, and more than 1,000 people applied for those jobs. Doesn't sound like a workforce shortage to me.

You don't need a master's degree in economics to understand that dramatically increasing the pool of labor puts downward pressure on wages. The law of supply and demand dictates that adding tens of thousands of immigrants to our labor pool will drive wages down for Mainers.

Please vote "ought not to pass" on LD 2167.

**Freebies for foreigners, waitlists for Mainers:  
Gov. Millstone's perfect storm**

The mother of all migrant magnets has been under construction in Augusta for two decades, if not longer. Engineered and fine-tuned by Maine's woke ruling class, it's designed to attract tens of thousands of illegal immigrants to settle here, all in the name of developing our economy and "strengthening our workforce" (newspeak for driving down wages with a large pool of cheap labor). More importantly for progressives, the accelerated influx will help remedy Maine's deplorable demographic profile as one of the whitest states in the country.

The latest model of the migrant magnet was rolled out last week under the banner of LD 2167, "An Act to Develop Maine's Economy and Strengthen Its Workforce by Establishing an Office of New Americans." The Governor's bill was referred to the State and Local Government Committee, which promptly scheduled a public hearing for Tuesday, January 30th at 1 pm in Room 214 of the Cross State Office Building.

If legislators give the nod to Gov. Janet Mills' proposal for a migrant resettlement agency in the executive branch of state government, we can expect to see an exponential increase in the number of unvetted foreign nationals who settle in Maine after crashing the USA's wide-open southern border with Mexico. They're now coming to Maine at the rate of about 3,000 per year, so many that Portland - Maine's premiere sanctuary city since 2003 - stopped counting them last year.

Mills wants to increase that number to 15,000 annually for the next five years, much to the applause of the cheap-labor lobby and its cheerleaders in Maine's lying, dying Fake News industry. Also aboard the bandwagon for the proposed 500% increase in Third World immigration are the cultural Marxists on both sides of the aisle in the Legislature, the cadres of diversity fascists camped out in the groves of academe, and Maine's sprawling Nanny State Non-Profit Industrial Complex.

Even without a new magnet to draw them northward, why wouldn't thousands more border-crashers head north to Maine after wading across the Rio Grande? It appears they all have cell phones, and no doubt saw the news reports about the brand-new luxury apartments in Brunswick, Maine that were set aside exclusively for illegal immigrants who identify as "asylum seekers." Maine taxpayers will graciously pick up the tab for their rent for the next two years. What's not to like about that sweet deal?

It beats being a native Mainer stuck on a waitlist.

Two years ago, the Portland Press Herald reported that "housing is so scarce in Greater Portland that there's a two-year wait for an apartment in a Portland Housing Authority property, and a five- to seven-year wait on a statewide list of 25,000 people seeking federal Section 8 housing vouchers."

Maine's useless politicians in Washington – who haven't lifted a finger to secure the wide-open southern border – know how bad the optics are when it comes to freebies for foreigners who entered the country illegally and were then escorted to the head of the line for subsidized housing. So here's how our public servants handle that PR nightmare.

US Senators Susan Collins and Angus King favor expedited work permits that would allow the "asylum seekers" to skip the mandatory six-month waiting period and get a job within days after stepping off the bus in Portland. As Collins put it, that would allow them to "become self-sufficient and contribute to the local community while their asylum claims are being adjudicated."

Are you kidding me? What percentage of the mostly low-skilled and no-skilled newcomers who don't speak English will become gainfully employed and self-sufficient? Does anyone seriously believe that even after a lifetime of employment their tax contributions will ever make a dent in the cost of the publicly-funded housing, healthcare, and educational benefits they will consume between now and retirement?

Free rent for two years in one of the luxury apartments in Brunswick will cost Maine taxpayers close to \$50,000 per unit if you assume the rent is \$2,000 monthly. How many years will the newcomers have to work and pay Maine state income taxes before they pay off that freebie?

In any case, at least 90 percent of the approximately 10,000 "asylum seekers" who have settled in Maine since Janet Mills took office have already been here for more than six months, making them eligible for the coveted work permits. How many of them have gone to work? We don't know because nobody is keeping track. Whatever the number is, it can't be very many, or the cheap-labor lobbyists at the Chamber would stop whining about the supposed workforce shortage.

Expedited work permits are just another magnet to attract economic migrants and incentivize them to file unwarranted asylum claims that will ultimately be rejected, by which time they will have blended into the population with no fear of deportation. No serious person expects any of them to self-deport when they get the bad news about their asylum applications sometime in the next decade.

That's exactly why the six-month waiting period was originally enacted under the Clinton administration: to discourage bogus asylum claims by economic migrants.

Bear in mind that neither the pending legislation nor Mills' executive order make any distinction between legal and illegal immigrants, despite the fact that we know with some certainty that upwards of 80 percent of asylum claims are bogus. Once those claims are denied, the illegal immigrants who filed them become immediately deportable.

Collins and King know this, and so does Gov. Mills, but they don't care. The prospect of cheap labor and tens of thousands of grateful new voters are all that matter to them.

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That economic reality explains why the state Chamber of Commerce and most of the regional chambers are all singing the praise of Mills' migrant magnet. Her press release last summer announcing the proposed "Office of New Americans" was chock full of praise from leaders of the local, regional, and state Chambers, as well as the scores of immigrant nonprofits with their snouts in the trough through which state revenue will flow when the ONA bureaucracy is up and running.

While Gov. Mills and her legions of sycophants tout the economic objective of "strengthening the workforce" as the centerpiece of their campaign to enact LD 2167, methinks they doth protest too much. I suspect there's a much deeper Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion (DEI) component driving cultural Marxists to celebrate the Mills administration shoving mostly white "old Mainers" aside to make way for mostly non-white "new Mainers."

In this respect, Mills' LD 2167 is reminiscent of former Sen. Roger Katz's LD 1492, introduced six years ago and titled, "An Act to Attract, Educate and Retain New Mainers to Strengthen the Workforce." It passed both houses by big margins but died for lack of funding at the end of the legislative session in 2018.

In his testimony, Katz said the quiet part out loud: Maine is too old and too white, and that's not something to be proud of. The solution, according to Katz, is to attract immigrants who have higher birth rates than Mainers.

Former Speaker of the House, Democrat Mark Eves of North Berwick, was even more explicit about the need to accelerate Third World immigration. During his unsuccessful primary campaign for Governor in 2018, he famously told a room full of supporters in Lewiston that, "Maine's whiteness is bad news."

He went on to tell the crowd, "Maine is going to be in trouble if it can't attract a more diverse population."

I could be mistaken, but it looks to me like Katz and Eves are actors in some kind of weird right-wing conspiracy drama about the great replacement.

Whatever.

In closing, take note that the thousands of "new Americans" who have already arrived in Maine apparently didn't get the memo about America being a systemically racist nation ruled by white supremacists. But don't worry. Once their kids are enrolled in Maine's government-run K-12 indoctrination centers, they will all learn just how rotten and racist we are.

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