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Testimony of Laura A. Fortman, Maine Labor Commissioner

Before the
Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs and the
Joint Standing Committee on Labor and Housing Regarding

L.D. 206 "An Act to Make Supplemental Appropriations and Allocations from the
General Fund and Other Funds for the Expenditures of State Government and to Change Certain
Provisions of the Law Necessary to the Proper Operations of State Government for the Fiscal Year
Ending June 30, 2023"

January 26, 2023

Good afternoon, Senator Rotundo, Representative Sachs, Senator Tipping, Representative Roeder, and members of the Joint Standing Committees on Appropriations and Financial Affairs and Labor and Housing. My name is Laura Fortman, and I am the Commissioner of the Maine Department of Labor. I appreciate this opportunity to present the Department's supplemental budget request.

The Department's two initiatives are on page A-33 of the budget document. Both initiatives are for the reclassification of two positions within the Bureau of Rehabilitation Services. The Bureau supports Maine's workforce by helping people with disabilities find, retain and advance in employment, and by providing employers with disability-related employment information and assistance.

Regarding these two initiatives, they are the final in a long-standing process that evaluates the classification of positions. In that process, a functional job analysis determines whether a position meets the requirements for reclassification, including pay adjustment. The State's collective bargaining agreements include negotiated language related to this process. Reclasses may be employee or management initiated. Approved employee-initiated actions include a retroactive pay component back to the date the request for review was signed. The two initiatives in the department's budget request funding for the approved actions, which is required before the reclassifications can be processed and paid.

The first position reclassification changes a vacant Procurement & Contracting Specialist position to a Contract/Grant Specialist position. The position is split funded between the two programs in the Bureau of Rehabilitation Services. The requests are for \$3,336 in the Blind and Visually Impaired program Other Special Revenue Fund, and for \$3,280 in the Rehabilitation Services program Federal Expenditures Fund.

The second position reclassification changes a Rehabilitation Services Manager position to a Public Service Manager I position retroactively to October 30, 2020. The request is for \$22,619 in the Blind and Visually Impaired program Federal Fund.

I would be happy to address any questions you may have or provide additional information for the work session.