

Erika Christie
York
LD 1190

April 6, 2023

Dear Honorable Members of the Labor and Housing Committee:

My name is Erika Christie and I am from York ,ME. I am the HR Manager at The Anchorage Inn & Sun'n Surf Restaurant in York Beach, ME. I am part of the tourism industry, an important sector to the economic health of the state. I am here today to oppose LD 1190 as written, which would require restrictive scheduling in Maine. The proposed legislation would create an unreasonable burden and cost to my small business community and the tourism industry.

There are several concerns:

- My business has a unique process and every employee has unique needs. It is not on-size fit-all. The flexibility to adapt to changing conditions, especially with weather and in shoulder seasons, would cause irreparable harm to my operations. A perfect example of this when a large group calls only 1 day before coming to our restaurant and Inn. Am I really to turn away that business – those hours of income to my team and tax dollars to Maine because I am no longer allowed to staff?
- These restrictions would also have an impact on customer service — resulting in not enough employees being scheduled, longer wait times, lost reservations and therefore lost shifts. My industry is not based on making it up tomorrow. I have to seat and serve meals when the customers come – then it is lost forever. And not just to me, but to the employees and in tax revenue to the state.
- The tourism industry is competitive and fast-paced and revolves around a number of variables, from weather to that last minute call. Currently, if an employee wants to attend an event, needs extra time for a school paper, or any other host of circumstances, I am able to accommodate those often last minute requests by offering those shifts to other employees without incurring a government penalty. These circumstances cannot be predicted in advance and an employer should not be punished with a fine for accommodating an employee's schedule or other circumstances beyond the hotel's control.
- Southern Maine's unique geographic location makes it extremely vulnerable to competition from surrounding NH businesses that are not subject to the same laws. If I am no longer able to offer flexibility, what is to stop someone from working in NH? This unnecessary and burdensome bill would make me unable to offer extra shifts at a moment's notice, which means fewer available shifts for workers and loss of income. I am already competing for team members and am struggling to fill open jobs before restrictive scheduling piles on another competitive disadvantage.
- This bill requires that schedules are transmitted by electronic means. Have you considered that there are those in the workforce who do not use electronic means? We have current team members who require a paper schedule; requiring electronic means of delivery would have a disparate impact on those who can't utilize electronic means.

Because of the unreasonable costs, concerning impact on reducing jobs and disturbing effects that this may have on my business and Maine's hospitality businesses, I urge the committee to vote LD 1190 out as ought not to pass. Thank you for listening and for remembering how important the hospitality industry is to Maine.

Sincerely,
Erika Christie