

Senator Nangle, Representative Stover, members of the Committee on State and Local Government. I'm writing in support of LD 2121, An Act to Address Chronic Understaffing of State Government Positions. My name is Tim Hebert and I am testifying on my own time as a private citizen.

I work as a Senior Technician for MaineDOT as a resident with contractors that place bids on the work through Project Development. I [submitted testimony on LD 258](#) for the biennial budget last year about the pay gap please feel free to go back and read it to learn more about my story and experience.

Last spring during our Bridge annual meeting, a slide show from power point showed the staffing of Bureau of Project Development and the reliance of 68% consultant use. It also shows the age distribution of project development staff, with 53% of staff over age 50 and 33.7% of staff over the age of 55. We are going to see a lot of these folks retiring soon, if they stick with the State long enough to that point and we will be losing a lot of institutional knowledge. I am concerned we can effectively recruit qualified staff to replace these workers with the Maine's current wage structure for state employees.

Another sheet mentions technician series reclassifications, which the person talking about the power point stated was started by Bureau of Project Development (BPD) management before the Bureau of Human Resources (BHR) put out that the class and comp would be done and that was documented at July of 2020. The person talking stated that BHR was taking too long and BDP decided to go at it themselves again. Also, the [Bangor Daily News story](#) last year that showed consultant pay went up due to costs associated with business and keeping qualified personnel. Maine needs to fix the classification system sooner than later, otherwise operations and staffing levels will get worse than they are today.

I am Senior Technician pay range 26 with topped out pay at \$35.46 per hour without longevity which hasn't changed in pay range since the 1970's. Transportation Engineer II, pay range 31 has a top pay of \$42.42 per hour. The Transportation Engineer has already gotten its compensation and classification change as of 2019. I recently applied to work with the consultants, which are used for 68% and They offered me starting between \$44-48 depending on whether the state would take me back ASAP which I was being told by my direct supervisor I would be. The pay gap needs the proper funding to attract and retain employees for the entire work/life balance.

As I said during my testimony for the LD 258 Biennial Budget hearing, I want state that the only reason I have not left state government is I want to fight in this position for my fellow employees for what is right, equitable and fair. We deserve to be compensated fairly and competitively for the hard work that we do for the State of Maine. Please fight for us on this and support LD2121.

Tim Hebert
Bangor