



# DeBlois Electric, Inc.

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February 19, 2024

Senator Joe Baldacci Representative Michele Meyer Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services 100 State House Station Augusta, Maine 04333

Re: Support of LD 2197 - An Act to Strengthen the Health, Well-being and Academic Success of Children and Their Families Through Increased Community Support of the Boys and Girls Clubs of Southern Maine

Dear Senator Baldacci, Representative Meyer and Members of the Committee,

My name is Mitch DeBlois, and I am President of DeBlois Electric in Lewiston Maine, and I am writing in support of LD 2197.

Boys & Girls Clubs of Southern Maine (BGCSM) provides much needed after school resources to hundreds of youths each year including at their Clubs in Auburn and Lewiston. We have been long-time supporters and have seen firsthand the success kids and teens have because of the safe places and mentoring relationships provided by their organization.

We are supporting this bill as the project the Boys & Girls Club of Southern Maine is undertaking in building the Bridge to Success Teen Center will benefit businesses like ours. Like other organizations, we are concerned about the growing need for trained young people to come into our profession. The Bridge to Success Center in Portland will act as an important program to allow young adults to explore a variety of careers during their junior and high school years and gain practical hands-on experiences on-site. Efforts like theirs will provide a pathway for youth to become excited about the potential for their futures before they graduate from high school. We know their nurturing environment is one where trust is paramount, and BGCSM are better suited than many to ensure success for these young people; many of whom come from difficult situations, but who deserve our collective support to become valuable citizens in our communities. Their endeavors provide all young people, undeterred by resources, with an unprecedented opportunity to learn in a safe and supportive environment that encourages participation and success in higher education or the trades. An opportunity most of the youth we serve would not otherwise have.

Support of this bill not only contributes to the overall goals of the Boys & Girls Clubs of Southern Maine, but also goes a long way in supporting the development and growth of all of Maine's youth as they grow into our workforce of the future, benefiting not only our company, but many others as well.

I strongly support LD 2197 and encourage you to do the same.

Thank you for your consideration.

*Michel J. DeBlois*

Mitch DeBlois | President

