

Good Afternoon Chair Tipping, Chair Roeder, and members of the Labor and Housing Committee,

My name is Wesley Marean and I had the privilege to participate in the Union Construction Academy from January 2024-February 2024. Living in rural Maine, the job insecurity had been an issue I dealt with for the last few years. The stability and pay was not where it needed to be for me to support myself or my family.

Since partaking in this program, I have gotten a huge head start into experiencing the different fields and unions available. Without the Union Construction Academy introducing me to the different qualifications and pathways, I would not have ended up working for the Carpenter's Union. I now have a job that I love and get to make a difference everyday while still earning wages and benefits that help provide for my family.

The Pre-apprenticeship program is important to helping not only job seekers find their path, but also helping our state grow and keep up with the influx of citizens. I believe that this program will help many others and should be given the opportunity to expand in order to train the future generations.

Thank you for your time,

Wesley Marean