



February 5, 2025

Honorable Michael Tipping, Senate Chair
Honorable Amy Roeder, House Chair
Joint Legislative Committee on Labor
100 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333

Re: Testimony in opposition to LD 60, An Act to Allow Employees to Request Flexible Work Schedules

Dear Senator Tipping, Representative Roeder, and Members of the Committee on Labor:

The Maine Water Utilities Association (MWUA) appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony in opposition to LD 60.

About MWUA. MWUA is a nonprofit association based in Augusta that provides support for water works professionals throughout the State of Maine in advocating for safe drinking water through educational and technical programming as well as advocacy on the local, state, and national level. The Association was formed in 1925 and consists of approximately 86 utility and 60 associate members. Maine's water utilities provide service to approximately 700,000 Maine residents, thousands of Maine businesses and public institutions, and millions of visitors to Maine every year.

Discussion. LD 60 would give employees a statutory right to ask for a flexible work arrangement up to twice per calendar year. MWUA believes that this expansion of employee statutory rights is not warranted. Employees already can ask for a flexible work arrangement from their employers – there is no statutory prohibition from doing so.

LD 60 requires employers to respond to requests for flexible work schedules in writing and provide the reason for denial in the written response. There appears to be no limit in the frequency in which an employee can request a flexible work schedule. Regardless of the number of requests, employers must respond in writing with the reason for denial.

This additional administrative burden on employers increases the cost of doing business. For a public utility, which includes consumer-owned water districts and municipal water departments, any increased costs would be passed on to the ratepayers we serve.

In this period of low unemployment and workforce shortages in Maine, it is common for employers to offer or accommodate work hour and/or location flexibility to recruit or retain employees. Businesses – including water utilities -- permit work hour and location flexibility based upon the specific needs and challenges of the business. Work schedule and location arrangements are best left to be worked out between the employer and employee rather than codifying additional statutory employee protections. In our view, this bill proposes a solution where there is no problem to fix.

Employers spend considerable resources ensuring compliance with existing State and federal employment statutes and regulations. Imposing additional administrative burdens on employers by statute without a



Letter from MWUA re LD 60

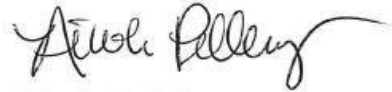
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clear and general demonstrated need, only serves to increase the cost of doing business in Maine without meaningful benefit. And in the case of water utilities, that means higher rates to consumers of public drinking water.

Conclusion. The proposed statutory protections for employees are not needed. We ask you to oppose this legislation and vote ought not to pass.

Thank you for your consideration,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nicki Pellenz", with a stylized, flowing script.

Nicki Pellenz
Executive Director

cc: Roger Crouse, Chair, MWUA Legislative & Regulatory Affairs Committee
James I. Cohen, Verrill Dana, LLP, Legislative Counsel

