



## **Testimony in Support of LD 576:**

**"An Act Regarding Reciprocal Licensure for Professional Engineers"**

Senator Tipping, Representative Roeder, and the distinguished members of the Committee On Labor, my name is Harris Van Pate and I serve as policy analyst for Maine Policy Institute. Maine Policy is a free market think tank, a nonpartisan, non-profit organization that advocates for individual liberty and economic freedom in Maine. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of LD 576, "An Act Regarding Reciprocal Licensure for Professional Engineers."

### **Reducing Barriers to Workforce Mobility**

Maine faces significant challenges in attracting and retaining skilled professionals, particularly in fields critical to infrastructure, energy, and manufacturing. LD 576 would streamline the licensure process for professional engineers from other states, making it easier for qualified professionals to contribute their expertise in Maine.

This bill recognizes that many professional engineers are already subject to rigorous education, testing, and experience requirements in other states and that requiring them to navigate redundant regulatory hurdles only discourages them from practicing in Maine. By establishing a transparent and efficient path for reciprocal licensing, LD 576 will make it easier for engineers to relocate, fill crucial roles, and support economic growth in the state.

### **Strengthening Maine's Infrastructure and Economic Competitiveness**

Maine is currently experiencing a shortage of engineers, particularly in the transportation, energy, and construction sectors.<sup>1</sup> Major projects such as broadband expansion, road and bridge maintenance, and renewable energy development require a strong, skilled engineering workforce.

Without sufficient qualified engineers, these projects face delays, increased costs, and a reliance on out-of-state firms. Maine cannot afford unnecessary bureaucratic roadblocks that discourage professionals from bringing their skills here. LD 576 removes an artificial barrier to employment and strengthens Maine's ability to compete for engineering talent.

### **Aligning Maine with Pro-Growth, Pro-Workforce Policies**

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.maine.gov/labor/infrastructure/index.shtml>



More than 40 states have enacted reforms to make occupational licensing more reciprocal, recognizing that unnecessary restrictions hurt both workers and the economy.<sup>2</sup> Eighteen states, including New Hampshire and Vermont, have universal recognition policies for out-of-state licensed professionals, meaning even professional licenses not subject to industry-specific reciprocity agreements are recognized there.

Maine must modernize its approach to professional licensing to ensure it remains competitive in attracting high-skill, high-wage professionals. LD 576 represents a practical, common-sense reform that aligns Maine's policies with national best practices while maintaining high public safety and competency standards.

## **Conclusion**

LD 576 is a crucial step toward breaking down unnecessary barriers to work, improving Maine's economic competitiveness, and ensuring our state has the engineering talent necessary for critical infrastructure projects. Maine will support economic growth, attract skilled professionals, and create more opportunities for businesses and workers by facilitating reciprocal licensure for professional engineers.

For these reasons, we strongly urge the committee to support LD 576 and vote "Ought to Pass." Thank you for your time and consideration.

---

<sup>2</sup> [https://compacts.csg.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/OL\\_8\\_Page\\_Graphic\\_JUNE\\_22\\_V-2\\_FINAL-1.pdf](https://compacts.csg.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/OL_8_Page_Graphic_JUNE_22_V-2_FINAL-1.pdf)