

Senator Lawrence, Representative Sachs, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities, and Technology. My name is Scott Cuddy and I live in Winterport. I am here today on behalf of my union, Local 1253 of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW 1253), and we are here to support LD 946, Resolve, to Increase Access to Energy Efficiency Programs by Low-income and Moderate-income Residents, as amended.

One of the things I remember from my time here and the several bills that I successfully got enacted into law, is that when labor issues enter a committee other than Labor, it can be confusing. In LD 946 I am specifically referencing the prevailing wage statute in section 3. It's not an energy issue, but it's still a very important one for this committee to consider.

There are prevailing wage laws at the federal and state levels, and their intent is the same. The intent is NOT to raise wages. The intent is not to lower wages. The intent is to ensure that the wage and benefits that *prevail* in a region, for a particular trade, are what get paid for that trade in that region. This is necessary because the federal and state governments are the largest purchasers of construction services in any given region. If a government were to pay the least possible wage for any trade performing work, it would have the effect of driving wages down. Ensuring that it's citizens make as little as possible is not in the interest of any government.

This is where this becomes such an important issue for this committee. There is so much money being spent on energy issues right now, whether it is generating power, conserving power, or transmitting power. This large influx of money could have a destabilizing effect on wages in our state if we're not careful. The easiest way to ensure that this doesn't happen is to attach prevailing wage to this. Contractors understand it, and it's effective at ensuring we don't drive wages down or up.

Adding prevailing wage requirements to any work that the state is procuring helps ensure workers are getting a fair shake, and that the state isn't impacting the wages in a given area. It is my hope that the committee will adopt the sponsors amendment, and vote Ought to Pass as amended on LD 946. I'm happy to answer any questions the might have.