

Hello, I am Travis Blake president of the Home builders and remodelers association of Maine and the president of JW Design Build.

We support the proposed bill LD 1226 for numerous reasons

I have been in the housing industry for 37 years. I started and grew a successful remodeling business in southern Maine. In this time, I have helped 7 past employees get the knowledge to start their own businesses. I have worked with the local CTE and Community colleges to help interns learn the great industry that we represent. Some of these past students still work for me today. Training and education are important to create and cultivate experienced quality builders

In 2011 I stood at a public hearing in support of a licensing bill presented by representative McDonald. It was tabled that year because it was felt we needed a uniform building code. In 2012 MUBEC was created, and we have now had this in place for many years. In 2011 there were many associations and industry professions that stood up against the licensing bill. There has been a major shift in this feeling, and we see a major need and requirement in the industry for licensing.

Do we wish we did not need licensing? Yes, our association is made up of quality builders that have accepted a code of ethics with the NAHB to be professionals in the industry. Our group is made up of the contractors that do the right thing. So, this license is business as usual for us with a small yearly fee and minimum education requirements that most of already do to always stay on top of our game.

With that being said, we support the bill because there are too many so-called builders that do not build to the same standard.

Without some regulation the consumer has no good action when they have been taken advantage of. With this bill there will be some accountability, and a list for consumers to see Licensed contractors listed.

Currently a person could be serving coffee today and tomorrow with no experience building a home for someone. It is harder to cut a person's hair in the State of Maine than to build a house. We currently have over 55 professional licenses in the state, Barber, Auctioneer, Manufactured Housing, Credit agency, etc..

An electrician requires a license and must work 12,000 hours under a master and pass 2 tests to be a master

A plumber requires a license and must work 6,000 hours under a master and pass test to be a master

A Barber must work 2500 hours and train under a barber to be licensed

Cosmetology requires 2500 hours and pass a test to be licensed.

But not the residential builder... So the house that all of us will go home and sleep in tonight was build by someone that could have been serving coffee before they built that house?

IS this bill perfect, No, but it is a great starting point. And once passed it will appoint a board of industry and related industry professionals to fine tune the process.

Proposed bills have been presented for over 20 years. This similar bill passed last year but did not get funded.

I was disappointed when I watched the voting to see our elected officials vote right down their party lines. This is disappointing because this is a consumer protection bill. It shouldn't matter if you are republican or democrat, lets protect all the people that voted you into office.

There have been comments that this will affect housing affordability, because contractors will raise their prices. Well, let's think about using and unlicensed individual who does shoddy work and then the client lives in an unsafe house. Do we want safe structures? Let's do the right thing for the consumer.

In closing, 33 states have state licenses, of the remaining states 14 of them have either local or county licenses, we are 1 of 3 states that has no licensing. Its time for us to protect our consumers and pass this bill.

And with many of our municipalities that do not have code enforcement officers or an inspection process based on their population it is more important than ever to have licensing in effect. I am working a small coastal community that is not required to have code enforcement because its under 4000 residence and the garage and mudroom we are building the only thing inspected is plumbing.

Thank you for your time  
Travis Blake, CGR

President

HBRAME and JW DESIGN BUILD

207-730-6991

[president@hbrame.org](mailto:president@hbrame.org)

Travis Blake  
Home Builders and Remodelers Association of Maine  
LD 1226

I am logged in to testify by zoom but not sure if I am correctly logged in.