

Manufacturers Association of Maine

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22 April 2025

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Senator Curry, Representative Gere and honorable members of the Committee on Housing and Economic Development, we offer this testimony in opposition to LD1664, "An Act to Repeal the Dirigo Business Incentives Program".

The Manufacturers Association of Maine (MAME) is a non-partisan 501(c)6 non-profit grounded in service to its membership, providing a network of resources designed to support the strategic business growth needs of Maine manufacturing entrepreneurs. Maine's manufacturing businesses are diverse, employing almost 60,000 individuals in military and defense, aerospace, metal fabrication, paper, boat building, semi-conductor, wood products, aquaculture and biotech, medical device, composites, and bioplastics, as well as the food and beverage industries. These businesses represent almost 10% of Maine's annual GDP and 14.5% of all the wages paid in the state on a weekly basis. MAME's mission is to help manufacturing grow and succeed and supports Maine's development of future manufacturing assets through a variety of programs.

Our members want to express strong opposition to LD 1664, which proposes the repeal of the Dirigo Business Incentives Program. This program is a cornerstone of Maine's strategic economic development efforts, designed to foster capital investment, enhance workforce training, and stimulate growth across key sectors of our economy.

Established with bipartisan support and signed into law by Governor Mills in 2023, the Dirigo Business Incentives Program replaced the outdated Pine Tree Development Zone (PTDZ) program. Unlike its predecessor, Dirigo is tailored to address Maine's current economic challenges by encouraging Capital Investment and Promoting Workforce Training. The program has already created active business engagement, exemplified by 25 Maine businesses having already applied for the Dirigo Business Incentive by early 2024.

The Dirigo Business Incentives Program is integral to Maine's 10-Year Economic Development Strategy, which aims to increase real wages, add 75,000 people to Maine's talent pool, and increase the value of what we sell per worker by 10%.

By fostering capital investment and workforce development, the Dirigo Business Incentives Program directly contributes to these objectives. Repealing the DBI would undermine Maine's efforts to build a resilient and competitive economy.

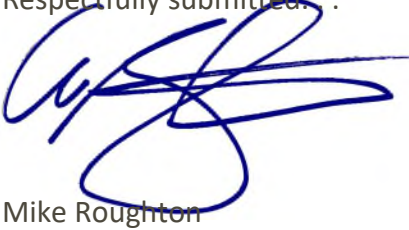


The program addresses critical needs in workforce development and capital investment, areas essential for Maine's economic prosperity.

We urge the committee to oppose LD 1664 and to continue supporting initiatives that drive sustainable economic growth and workforce development in Maine.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully submitted, .



Mike Roughton
Executive Director