

Manufacturers Association of **Maine**

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2 May 2025

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Senator Baldacci, Representative Salisbury and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on State and Local Government:

My name is Mike Roughton and I am submitting this testimony on behalf of the Manufacturers Association of Maine in strong support of LD 1649, Resolve, to Establish the Blue Ribbon Commission to Study the Operations of the Legislature. 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. The necessity for this commission is underscored by the pressing need for the Legislature to function effectively and efficiently in serving the citizens of our great state...

Meetings held last fall by the Rules Committee had stakeholder's hoping that significant changes would be made to the legislative process. Countless stakeholders with diverse backgrounds and experience(including MAME and its representatives) weighed-in, raising concerns about transparency, accountability, civility and time management. The conversations were robust, and many believed the process would lead to meaningful changes. Unfortunately, the reforms ultimately adopted by the 132nd Legislature have done little to address those concerns.

The health, safety, and welfare of Maine's communities, its citizens and the non-profits and businesses who operate here depend on a responsive and adaptive legislative body that can meet the challenges of an ever-evolving political and social landscape. The proposed commission aims to examine the existing structure and operations of the Legislature, ensuring that it can effectively address the needs of those constituencies.

By convening this Commission, the legislature would position itself to gain valuable insights and implement necessary changes in a timely manner. This

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87 Winthrop Street.
Augusta, ME 04330
info@mainemfg.com
P: 207-747-4406
www.mainemfg.com

Satellite office: 2 Portland Fish Pier
Maine International Trade Center
Suite 211
Portland, ME 04101



proactive approach would demonstrate your commitment to transparency, accountability, and improved governance. The urgency of this matter cannot be overstated; delays could hinder our ability to adapt and respond effectively to the issues facing our state.

The diverse membership of the commission, including representatives from both the Senate and House, as well as public members with expertise in various fields, will bring a wealth of perspectives and knowledge to the table. This collaborative effort is essential in identifying strengths and weaknesses within the current legislative operations and proposing solutions that enhance efficiency and public trust.

Furthermore, the commission's focus on critical elements such as training for legislators, the legislative calendar, and the prioritization of legislation ensures that you're not only looking at current practices but also envisioning a more effective future for our legislative body. By addressing these components, you can foster a legislative environment that is not only productive but also reflective of the values and needs of your constituents.

In closing, MAME supports the establishment of the Blue-Ribbon Commission to Study the Operations of the Legislature. It is a crucial step toward enhancing the legislative process, and our membership urges committee members to recognize the importance of this initiative and **vote to Ought to Pass**.

Thank you for your time, and for your continued commitment to Maine's future.

Respectfully submitted, .



Mike Boughton
Executive Director

