

# Manufacturers Association of **Maine**

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05 May 2025

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**Mike Roughton**

Senator Rafferty, Representative Murphy and honorable members of the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs, my name is Mike Roughton, and I am submitting testimony today on behalf of the Manufacturers Association of Maine (MAME) to express our strong support for LD 1740, "An Act To Support Regional Workforce Development."

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. What all these companies share is a common need: a skilled, accessible, and sustainable workforce. LD 1740 addresses this need directly by providing the regional infrastructure and flexible funding needed to expand and align workforce solutions across communities and industries.

Our recently adopted 2025 Workforce Development Strategy outlines a comprehensive approach to strengthening Maine's manufacturing talent pipeline. Through that strategy, we have identified persistent challenges: significant awareness gaps among youth and jobseekers, lack of alignment between employer needs and existing training resources, and difficulties recruiting and retaining talent across our industry.

LD 1740 directly supports the most urgent priorities in our plan:

**Youth and Adult Pipeline Development:** LD 1740's focus on regional solutions complements MAME's initiatives, including our internship programs, employer-educator partnerships, and classroom-to-career field guides. These efforts are made stronger when embedded in a system that supports regional collaboration and community-level innovation.



**Capacity Building and Resource Alignment:** MAME routinely advocates for better alignment between our educational institutions and employer needs. LD 1740 promotes partnerships among CTEs, community colleges, universities, and employers—exactly the model we believe is essential for addressing Maine’s skill gaps and for developing targeted, regionally relevant workforce strategies.

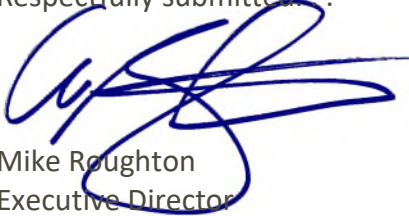
**Employer Engagement:** Regional workforce boards, as supported in LD 1740, are critical partners in helping manufacturers access tools, funding, and support for training, upskilling, and recruitment. With LD 1740, manufacturers, especially small and mid-sized firms, can benefit from more accessible and coordinated regional programs.

In MAME’s overarching workforce development strategy, we emphasize the importance of public-private collaboration, strategic advocacy, and funding sustainability. LD 1740 helps Maine deliver on all three. The bill encourages partnerships that reflect the real needs of both workers and employers, ensures that state investments are rooted in data-driven strategies, and provides the framework to scale successful models.

Our membership urges the Committee to support LD 1740. This legislation builds the capacity Maine needs to compete for talent, grow our manufacturing base, and support the next generation of skilled workers. MAME stands ready to work with the state, regional boards, and other partners to ensure the success of this important initiative.

Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Respectfully submitted, .



Mike Roughton  
Executive Director

