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Testimony in Support of LD 1812 (“An Act to Provide Low-interest Loans for Accredited College Graduates Entering Trade Professions and an Employer Tax Credit for Trade Tool Reimbursements”)

J. Andrew Cashman on behalf of the Maine Association of REALTORS®

May 9, 2025

Senator Curry, Representative Gere and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Housing and Economic Development my name is Andy Cashman. I am the Founder of Resolve Government Relations. We represent the Maine Association of REALTORS®, a professional trade association established in 1936 with over 6,500 members statewide. REALTORS® protect private property rights, build Maine communities, and grow our state’s economy. Our members represent buyers and sellers involved in both residential and commercial real estate transactions. Our membership also includes industry affiliates, such as lenders, closing agents, title agents, appraisers, building inspectors, surveyors, etc. The Maine Association is chartered by the National Association of REALTORS® (NAR), the largest trade association in the country.

The Maine Association of REALTORS® supports LD 1812. The bill would establish the Loans for Trade Tools Program within the Finance Authority of Maine to provide low-interest loans to graduates of a trade program to purchase the tools and equipment needed for employment in a trade. The bill would also create an employer tax credit for qualified reimbursements of employee’s tools.

As the oldest state in the country, it is essential that we create avenues for job growth within the trades industry for the next generation. There is no shortage of jobs for construction-related trades as Maine struggles to create more housing. The shortage of tradespeople is but one cause for delays in construction. To increase housing we need skilled tradespeople, many of whom begin their careers through apprenticeship and preapprenticeship programs. This proposal is one way to support growth opportunities within our trade programs and make entry into the trade profession easier.

We support this bill because it provides solutions to a multitiered problem. Maine needs more skilled workers contributing to the creation of housing and LD 1812 would do this by providing support at the start of a skilled trade career that will empower more individuals to confidently enter the field. The expense of needed tools is sometimes a barrier to entry or success at the onset of a new profession that is reliant on quality tools to perform necessary tasks. LD 1812 would incentivize opportunities for new tradespeople, in turn, creating a stronger workforce in Maine, and addressing our housing concerns. For these reasons, we respectfully urge you to vote Ought to Pass on LD 1812. Thank you for your time and consideration.



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