



MAINE AFL-CIO

A Union of Unions Standing for Maine Workers

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Testimony of Maine AFL-CIO Legislative & Political Director Adam Goode, in Support of L.D. 1280 "An Act to Establish the Maine Buy American and Build Maine Act"

Senator Claxton, Representative Martin and members of the Joint Standing Committee on State and Local Government, my name is Adam Goode. I serve as the Legislative and Political Director of the Maine AFL-CIO. We represent 40,000 working men and women in the state of Maine. We work to improve the lives and working conditions of our members and all working people.

The Maine AFL-CIO supports LD 1280, "An Act to Establish the Maine Buy American and Build America Act". We all share a goal of passing legislation that will create jobs in the United States. When we pass LD 1280, we will help support and create manufacturing jobs. Manufacturing is an important part of a healthy economy. These are jobs that have been a core of our small towns and the middle class in Maine.

"Common sense" is the best way to describe a policy that puts our tax dollars towards creating and maintaining jobs locally. The long term trend of transitioning manufacturing jobs overseas is a lose-lose for Maine workers and communities. Companies that manufacture overseas present a challenge to workers, their families and their neighborhoods.

It is not right that companies manufacture overseas in order to avoid being held to the same standards as local companies. These standards include basic rules around workplace safety, child labor and environmental protection. Manufacturing overseas often results in working people being exploited through unsafe and deplorable conditions at their job. Voting to pass this bill would help minimize that practice. Procuring iron, steel and other goods through overseas manufacturing undermines American companies that play by the rules. Why should we reward companies that off-shore and avoid playing by the rules?

This legislation includes clear definitions of manufactured goods and of manufacturing in the United States. We believe that these definitions would be clear to anyone that supports workers, manufacturing and middle class jobs in Maine.

This bill stands out to us because it includes clear language that defines state contractors and in providing for preferences for in state contractors. The policy in LD 1280 around preferences for state contractors is a good policy that we believe the committee should support.

We urge you to vote ought-to-pass on LD 1280.