



**Testimony In Opposition To
LD 1190, An Act to Ensure a Fair Workweek by Requiring Notice of Work Schedules**

April 6, 2023

Senator Tipping, Representative Roeder, and Honorable Members of the Labor and Housing Committee,

My name is Alexander Price. I am here today on behalf of the Maine Jobs Council to speak in opposition to LD 1190, An Act to Ensure a Fair Workweek by Requiring Notice of Work Schedules. The Maine Jobs Council is a statewide, nonpartisan, member-driven advocacy organization that advances public policies to support the creation and preservation of foundational jobs in Maine.

We oppose LD 1190 because it would have a negative impact on attracting and retaining foundational jobs by increasing the costs and burdens on employers at a time when most are already struggling. Maine's regulatory and business environments rank among the lowest in the nation. We are 44th in the nation in overall economic ranking and 42nd in the nation in venture capital investment. Maine has the 3rd highest tax burden, the 9th highest healthcare costs, the 11th highest cost of living, and the 13th highest energy costs. At the same time, Maine is facing a serious workforce shortage. We have an aging workforce and not enough young people moving to or staying in Maine. We encourage this committee to consider legislation that helps address the pending workforce crisis.

The Maine Jobs Council certainly supports making workers a top priority. However, the best way to do that is with a robust economy full of quality foundational jobs that provide choices, career growth and increasing wages. This bill would lead to just the reverse. While well-intentioned, this bill would make business operations more costly, reduce economic output, and lead to fewer jobs. Employers and managers need a level of flexibility to respond to fluctuating labor needs. Businesses would be forced to offer fewer part-time positions, schedule fewer employees per shift, or offer fewer jobs. As a result, workers would have less flexible schedules, and potentially fewer hours, at a time when many workers increasingly value a flexible work environment.

Further, the compensation owed for schedule changes, along with the potential fine for noncompliance, would be disastrous for many businesses. Again, this could lead to businesses having to find ways to cut costs, including reducing the number of employees they hire. These additional costs, along with Maine's already generous earned paid leave law that provides employees with additional paid time off, would be devastating for employers.

Finally, very few other states have adopted this kind of law. As such, this bill would continue to make Maine an outlier at a time when Maine already ranks among the lowest in the nation in numerous economic, regulatory, and demographic rankings.

Individual pieces of legislation like the ones that have been introduced to this committee today are not the solution to solving Maine's economic problems. We encourage this committee to start taking a more comprehensive look at how workforce challenges, taxes, regulations, infrastructure, and other issues act as a barrier to job creation in our state. Maine needs to develop and follow a long-term strategic plan to create a tax base that works for all Mainers.

The MJC thanks the committee for its time and consideration of this issue, and we would welcome any opportunity to discuss it with you.

Thank you,

Alexander Price, Pierce Atwood
On behalf of the Maine Jobs Council