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May 12, 2023

Testimony of Rep. Tiffany Roberts presenting

**LD 1709, An Act to Establish a Baseline of Consistency and Safety for the
Operation of Construction Cranes and Elevators**

*Before the Joint Standing Committee on Innovation, Development, Economic Advancement
and Business*

Good afternoon, Senator Curry and esteemed colleagues on the Innovation, Development, Economic Advancement and Business Committee. My name is Tiffany Roberts and I represent House District 149 and the communities of North Berwick and South Berwick. I am here before you today to present *LD 1709, An Act to Establish a Baseline of Consistency and Safety for the Operation of Construction Cranes and Elevators*.

As the state and its construction industry continue to build vertically, there is a need to understand the size and reach of the industry, especially as it pertains to the individuals performing potentially dangerous construction work. The use of heavy equipment (construction cranes in this case) and external construction hoists will continue to increase. As this occurs, we must ensure the safety of those operating those pieces of equipment, the workers engaged in and below them and the broad swath of the public who are directly impacted. As some of you may recall, we looked at these two issues last session, but it was determined that licensing and separating the two was not the path forward, so that brings us to this bill before you.

In order to set a baseline of situational awareness for the state, this bill establishes a framework for the registration of operators of construction cranes as well as hoists. It also streamlines and creates consistency among the training expectations and certifications with regard to the operation of these pieces of equipment. Finally, it allows for a review of the validity of the information provided in the case of a suspected and/or documented discrepancy.

Confirming, standardizing and streamlining training for operating construction cranes and construction hoists ensures a reduced risk of injury and/or loss of property, reduces the risk (and its severity) for both the employer and the staff working at the construction site

We have heard over the years that operators in the state of Maine all have the safety training, certifications and credentials necessary to keep the worksite and the general public safe. We have also heard the number of those operators varies depending on who you ask. This committee's

numbers have added up to 150 all the way to 800. This bill provides industry-level situational awareness which is critical at this time.

There have been multiple conversations with the Department over the past years. I understand that, as it is currently written, they are not in support. Stakeholders and I are committed to continuing these conversations, as well as working with the committee, to try to land in a place that gets us on the right path forward.

Thank you for your consideration, and I would be happy to answer any questions but would defer to those more knowledgeable coming after me.