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THE MAINE SENATE
131st Legislature

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Testimony in Support of LD 1922
An Act to Allow Bargaining Agents for Public Sector Unions to Merge

Presented to the Joint Standing Committee on Labor and Housing
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Senator Tipping, Representative Roeder and esteemed members of the Joint Standing Committee on Labor and Housing, my name is Troy Jackson. I serve as President of the Maine Senate and proudly represent Aroostook County in the Legislature. Please accept my written testimony in favor LD 1922, "An Act to Allow Bargaining Agents for Public Sector Unions to Merge." I apologize for not being able to testify in person.

This bill is straightforward. It simply allows two or more bargaining agents who are certified by the Executive Director of the Maine Labor Relations Board and are members or affiliates of the same public employee unit to merge as one.

Here is an example of how it would work. For illustration, I will use a fictional Maine town called East Farthing. East Farthing contains three different associations in its School Administrative District: one represents teachers; one represents educational technicians; and one represents food service providers. Presently, if these three associations want to merge into one, all three would have to separately go to the Maine Labor Relations Board to decertify and then present themselves as one for recertification as a single association.

By contrast, LD 1922 would allow the three associations to collectively file a petition to merge. This would allow one election with only the question of merger on the ballot. If a majority of the employees represented by each bargaining agent votes in favor, then the executive director of the board will order the merger and the group can negotiate as one. As you can see, this simplifies the bargaining process for all concerned.

In closing, I ask you to support LD 1922 and the public employees who may choose this option. I am confident that those behind me will have greater detail and will be able to answer any questions. Thank you.