



**Testimony of Larry Grondin
in Opposition to LD 373**

"An Act to Improve Labor Conditions for Maine Workers"

Senator Tipping, Representative Roeder, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Labor and Housing. My name is Larry Grondin. I am the President of R.J. Grondin & Sons, a third-generation excavation company in southern Maine and the chair of ABC Maine's Government Affairs Committee. ABC is a national association with 69 chapters representing more than 21,000 merit shop construction and construction-related firms. On behalf of ABC Maine's 182 members who employ over 2,500 people we are testifying today in opposition to LD 373.

According to the amendment to the concept draft offered 7 days ago, this bill would impose "employer employee harmony agreements" between labor unions and employers. While they may differ in minor ways, these agreements are essentially project labor agreements. ABC Maine firmly opposes project labor agreements in any form and views them as a way to carve out work for a limited number of contractors at the expense of a much larger majority. For context, Maine's construction workforce is over 90% non-union. To be clear, the bill in front of you would set aside billions of dollars of work for less than 10% of the Maine construction workforce.

One might ask, if there is less than 10% of Maine's construction workforce that would be eligible to work on these projects, where would we find the workers? Unfortunately, there is a simple answer to this question - out of state. The only possible way to complete the massive amounts of State work would be to hire out-of-state, unionized contractors at the expense of Maine workers who have chosen not to be represented by or join a union.

Our opponents may say that another way to have Mainers work on these projects is to simply agree to the harmony agreements and allow the union to represent their employees. The bottom line is that many of our member companies simply will not bid on a project that mandates these types of agreements. As merit shop contractors, our members work under a different model that would make this compromise simply a non-starter. For the companies and their employees that are not signatories to these types of agreements, it's simply easier to bid for and win work that doesn't include these provisions.

It's also worth noting that PLAs are documented time and time again to increase costs on state and federal projects anywhere from 12-20%. The sheer volume of work that would be encompassed under this bill would result in fewer projects being completed and at a higher cost. We do not agree with enacting policies that are documented and proven to increase costs to taxpayers.



Another major fault with this bill is the way that it got to this point. This bill was introduced in the first session and carried over with literally no language even though leadership said not to introduce concept drafts. So here we are today, having a public hearing on language that was just introduced 7 days ago and was then amended 4 days ago. These are not sound governing practices.

This bill will tie the hands of the State and eliminate the participation of the vast majority of upstanding Maine companies working for this great state. We hope this committee will vote "ought not to pass" on LD 373.

Thank you and I'd be happy to answer any questions you may have today or provide additional information for the work session.