

February 7th, 2024

Senator Nangle, Representative Stover, members of the Committee on State and Local Government, my name is Gaven Speirs from Oxford, Maine. I am here on my own time to speak in support of LD 2121, An Act to Address Chronic Understaffing of State Government Positions.

While I have only been working with MaineDOT's Poland Camp as a transportation worker for a short time, the impact of short staffing my co-workers have talked about are astonishing to me. Six people have recently left or moved to other jobs. We have a small crew as it is. There is a regular and quick turnaround for people getting their licenses here and then going to higher paying jobs elsewhere. This makes it harder on the people that stay to work longer hours under stress and fatigue. This creates a negative environment that causes even more workers to leave due to the pay not being worth the conditions of being over worked this dangerous line of work.

Having to work for long hours is dangerous. Without a full crew, it is common for my coworkers (ranging from 40-60 years of age) to work upward of 32 hours per shift when operational needs call for us to stay on the road. They all, we all wish for fairer wages but don't leave due to the time we have invested in MaineDOT. We take pride in our work, but no new people seem to join or stick around. The majority of the issues we are experiencing can be resolved by fixing the compensation and classification issues.

Please pass LD 2121. Thank you for your time.

Gaven Speirs
Oxford, Maine.