

Testimony in Opposition to LD 55, "An Act to Amend the Law Governing the Accrual of Earned Paid Leave"

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Good morning, Senator Tipping, Representative Roeder, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Labor. My name is James Myall and I'm here today to testify on behalf of the Maine Center for Economic Policy against LD 55, "An Act to Amend the Law Governing the Accrual of Earned Paid Leave." MECEP opposes LD 55 because it would undermine Maine's earned paid leave law and weaken protections for working Mainers.

This bill is relatively straightforward so I will keep my testimony relatively short. LD 55 would give employers complete discretion over the amount of earned paid leave that can be accrued by an employee in a single year. This would completely eviscerate the law, by allowing an employer to set an accrual limit of just one hour per year – or perhaps even zero hours per year. The reason the law exists is to set a basic standard of paid leave for most workers in Maine, and this bill would remove that.

There is nothing in the current EPL law that prevents an employer from allowing accrual of more than 40 hours per year in paid leave, and many employers in Maine take that opportunity to offer more generous benefits to their workers. The only effect of this bill would be to weaken worker protections, and for that reason I urge you to vote "ought not to pass."

Thank you. I'm happy to answer any questions.