

Testimony of Jake Lachance

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Before the Joint Standing Committee on Labor

In Support to LD 833, "An Act to Expand the Earned Paid Leave Exception"

Sen. Tipping, Rep. Roeder, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Labor, my name is Jake Lachance, and I am a Government Relations Specialist for the Maine State Chamber of Commerce, which advocates for over 5,000 large and small businesses across the State of Maine. I am here today to express support for LD 833, "An Act to Expand the Earned Paid Leave Exception," on behalf of Maine's business community.

Maine employers recognize the importance of offering paid leave benefits to their employees. Many businesses already provide competitive leave policies that go above and beyond state requirements. LD 833 is a reasonable and necessary measure that acknowledges and rewards those employers by exempting businesses that already provide 80 or more hours of paid leave annually from additional earned paid leave mandates.

For Maine businesses, this bill provides much-needed flexibility. By reducing redundant regulatory burdens, LD 833 allows employers to tailor benefits packages that best fit their workforce while maintaining compliance with existing laws. This exemption recognizes businesses that have proactively prioritized employee well-being without imposing unnecessary administrative costs.

Furthermore, this bill helps level the playing field for businesses that already invest significantly in employee benefits. Without this exemption, well-intentioned businesses could face duplicative requirements, adding to operational costs and potentially reducing their ability to offer other incentives, such as higher wages, bonuses, or additional benefits.

Maine's economy thrives when businesses can operate efficiently while taking care of their employees. LD 833 strikes the right balance, ensuring that workers receive the leave they deserve without overregulating businesses that are already meeting or exceeding these standards.

I urge the committee to support LD 833 and recognize the efforts of responsible employers who are already doing their part. Thank you for your time, and I welcome any questions you may have.