



Mike Tipping
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THE MAINE SENATE
132nd Legislature

3 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333

Representative Roeder and colleagues of the Labor Committee,

It's my pleasure to present LD 598, An Act to Require Minimum Pay for Reporting to Work. This bill is the result of a long consultative process last term that began with the introduction of a much broader bill around fair work schedules.

Based on the input of a wide range of stakeholders, this committee reported out what you see again before us today - a relatively simple guarantee that if you are called in for a shift and it's cancelled when you get there, you still get paid for two hours.

This bill passed in both houses last year and made it off the appropriations table, but was unfortunately among the group of bills that was held by the governor at the end of the session.

LD 598 exempts agricultural, fisheries and seasonal industries. It includes exemptions for adverse weather, natural disasters, illnesses and injuries. It also exempts employees who are informed of the shift cancellation any time up to the moment they show up, even when they're already on their way in to work.

You might then ask, why is such a narrow protection worth passing.

It's important because of a shift in how certain industries have been scheduling their employees. In recent decades, we've seen large businesses move to a just-in-time model for supply chains, with parts and products arriving just before they're needed as a way of promoting efficiency and cutting down on warehousing costs.

That's great, but many large businesses have also moved to a just-in-time model for scheduling their employees. They now use algorithms to track and predict their staffing needs, modifying work schedules on the fly and at the very last minute. This is especially true for national retail, restaurant and hotel chains.

For these large employers, this practice allows them to increase efficiency and lower costs, but those costs are now being passed on to employees. They must keep their schedules open in order to work on short notice and they often find that shifts they were planning on have been cancelled with little warning, sometimes after they're already at work. The burden of these precarious schedules obviously falls heaviest on those workers who make some of the lowest wages, receive the fewest benefits, are the least likely to be organized and struggle the most to have their voices heard.

It also falls most heavily on those who care for children or older family members, work multiple jobs or who have disabilities or difficulty accessing transportation.

This bill wouldn't eliminate that burden, but it would align us with the rest of New England and ensure that if you're called in, you arrange for childcare, you pay for the gas to drive to work and only then find out that your shift is cancelled, you don't bear that full cost alone.

Thank you for your consideration and I'd be happy to answer any questions.