

Thomas Frank
Written Testimony
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Senator Baldacci, Representative Salisbury, members of the State and Local Government Committee, I am Thomas Frank. I am here on my own time to speak about chronic staffing issues and the state employee pay gap for Maine's Executive Branch Workers. I ask for you to support LD 1265, LD 1539, and LD 1744. I currently work for the Maine DOT Highway crew. We are experiencing major staffing issues that can be fixed with proper investment and attention.

Americans everywhere are downsizing their quality-of-life expectations to cope with the cost of living. I myself work diligently to support a family, like many others, and the reality of my situation is that if nothing changes, my home and assets will never be afforded maintenance to maintain them past the next decade. My wife is an accountant, we have a very frugal lifestyle, and have secondary lucrative skills and work, on top of renting a room. I believe that many Americans are simply pursuing security where there was once the pursuit of meaningful improvement of one's way of life.

I understand this is a complex issue; however, I believe that the only improper approach is to do nothing at all in the face of a problem that stands to be inherited by our children. I believe that we have an obligation to stand up for a better minimum standard for our quality of life and also by proxy the minimum livable wage. I believe these bills are the least that we can do in the current state affairs where these aforementioned issues are beyond endemic. I believe that these 3 items are a strong first step. We need to use our time to set an example that others will be encouraged to follow. With your support of these bills, Maine will be on a clearer road to do our jobs better, recruit and retain good quality workers, and tackle more projects to benefit Maine's public transportation system.

I am honored to speak today before this committee, thank you for meeting with us here today.