



**Testimony of Maine Labor Climate Council Neither For Nor Against LD 1868, "An Act to Advance a Clean Energy Economy by Updating Renewable and Clean Resource Procurement Laws"**

Senator Lawrence, Representative Sachs, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology, my name is Francis Eanes and I'm the Executive Director of the Maine Labor Climate Council, a coalition of 20 labor unions here in the state of Maine working together to good jobs for all workers as our state transitions to clean energy. I'm here today to speak Neither For Nor Against LD 1868.

Our state, like much of the world, is in the midst of the most profound energy transition since the industrial revolution, and many our organization's affiliated unions have built some of our state's largest clean energy projects to date. We support the ambition of our state's leadership on this, and support many features of this proposed bill, including the more aggressive overall 2040 targets, the expanded clean electricity standard, and regular procurements to effectively implement the law and ensure we actually meet our energy targets.

This bill comes at a moment when global and domestic energy markets face tremendous fluctuations due to the combination of the federal government's fluctuating tariffs regimes and uncertainty about the survival of federal clean energy tax credits. Those credits in particular have been an important factor supporting the buildout of affordable clean energy in Maine that has driven down costs for ratepayers, while creating thousands of good-paying jobs for Mainers close to home. Over the last few weeks, some of our organizations affiliated unions have received word that several large clean energy projects that they *thought* were going to break ground this spring are indefinitely postponed due to all of this uncertainty. That's hundreds of jobs that are suddenly up in the air, which profoundly affects the lives of working people just trying to pay their mortgage. If it passes, this bill and its regularly scheduled procurements could provide much-needed certainty at a moment when it's badly needed, while giving our state the flexibility it needs to procure the most cost-effective energy resources as technology and innovation advance over the coming fifteen years.

However, as with all state policy to create and drive new markets, it is critical that this transition tackle inequality just as rigorously as it tackles the climate crisis, and that we create a fairer and more just world on the other side for all workers and Maine communities. In recent years, this committee and the Legislature as a whole have passed bills that inject strong labor standards into the procurement of energy from offshore wind and Northern Maine. These standards ensure that all workers — whether union or non-union — receive not only a fair wage, but also access to health and retirement resources that *all* workers deserve during and after a career of physical and demanding work. We understand that procurement language previously in a draft version of this bill, LD 1868, is now entirely in LD 1270, which has another work session this Thursday. As

these two complementary bills progress, we stand ready to engage with the GEO, bill sponsors, and the rest of this committee to ensure that these standards make it into the appropriate places.

Thank you for your consideration.