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THE MAINE SENATE
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**Joint Standing Committee on Taxation on
LD 1865, Resolve, to Create a Tax Incentive Pilot Project to Encourage
Businesses to Adopt a 4-day Workweek
May 8, 2025**

Senator Grohoski, Representative Cloutier, and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Taxation: My name is Senator Rick Bennett. I live in Oxford and represent the good people of Western Maine, encompassing 14 communities across parts of Androscoggin, Cumberland and Oxford Counties. I'm here today to present LD 1865, a forward-looking and pragmatic resolve to establish a tax incentive pilot program encouraging businesses to experiment with a 4-day workweek.

This proposal is rooted in a simple principle: Maine people work hard—and they deserve to thrive, not just survive.

We've seen it before. In the early 20th century, industrial giants like Henry Ford recognized that shorter workweeks not only boosted morale but actually improved productivity and profits. When President Franklin D. Roosevelt ushered in the 40-hour workweek with the Fair Labor Standards Act in 1938, critics feared economic disaster. Instead, it helped usher in an era of prosperity and strengthened the American middle class.

Now, 80 years later, we're at another inflection point. Technology and productivity have surged, yet working families are stretched thin. The 5-day, 40-hour workweek no longer fits the lives of many Mainers. We need to rethink what work looks like in the 21st century—starting with this modest, common-sense pilot.

Here's what we know from recent global trials:

A large-scale study¹ conducted by Cambridge University, Boston College, and Oxford University across six countries—including the U.S.—reported:

- 67% of employees felt less burned out;
- 96.7% experienced reduced stress;
- Businesses saw a 37.5% increase in revenue;
- And nearly all participants stuck with the 4-day model.

¹ Schor, Juliet B., Wen Fan, Orla Kelly, Guolin Gu, Tatiana Bezdenezhnykh, Niamh Bridson-Hubbard, 2022, "The Four Day Week: Assessing Global Trials of Reduced Work Time with No Reduction in Pay," Four Day Week Global, Auckland, NZ. With contributions from: Jacob Chapple, Sarah Ix and Meriel Zhao

A 2023 Canadian pilot² involving 41 companies found that:

- Revenue rose by 15%;
- Employee mental and physical health improved by 17% and 12%, respectively;
- Work-life balance improved by 35%;
- And all 41 companies chose to continue the new schedule.

Let's be clear: this isn't just theory. Major employers like Microsoft Japan saw productivity jump 40% after adopting a 4-day week. Kickstarter made it permanent after positive results. Panasonic is exploring it. In the U.S., firms like Shake Shack and Bolt are also joining this wave—not out of ideology, but because it works.

Maine companies, especially small and mid-sized ones, deserve the tools and support to explore these innovations for themselves. This resolve creates a low-risk way to do just that, through a voluntary pilot backed by data collection and guided by results—not assumptions.

And the benefits could ripple outward. A shift to a 4-day workweek could supercharge our tourism economy, already a major engine for the state. According to Maine Office of Tourism data, weekends with holidays bring a 35% spike in visitation³. Imagine the economic lift if Mainers had more time to travel, shop, or enjoy the natural beauty of our state—every week.

This is not about working less—it's about working smarter. It's about aligning our work culture with the possibilities of modern technology and the needs of modern families. Maine has the chance to lead—not just follow—in crafting a more humane, effective, and sustainable economy.

This resolve will give us the data we need to understand what works best for Maine businesses and workers. And if it succeeds, it will provide a roadmap for future prosperity rooted in productivity, health, and dignity.

I urge you to support LD 1865. Let's give Maine businesses the freedom to innovate, and Maine workers the opportunity to thrive—not just in their jobs, but in their lives. Let's build a future of work that works for everyone.

Thank you, and I welcome your questions.

² Schor, J. B., Fan, W., & Gu, G. (2023). *The 4 day week: 12 months on with new US and Canadian research*. Four Day Week Global.

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/60b956cbe7bf6f2efd86b04e/t/64bf03247945af1b225b5dc6/1690239781364/4+Day+Week+Global+Report+-+12+Months+On.pdf>

³ This data includes an analysis of Memorial Day, July 4th, and Labor Day. This lift is most substantial during the weekend before the 4th of July. The data was provided by the Maine Office of Tourism legislative liaison.