



MAINE AFL-CIO

A Union of Unions Standing for Maine Workers
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Testimony of Adam Goode, Maine AFL-CIO Legislative & Political Director, In Support of LD 1824, “An Act to Prohibit the Public Release of Information Regarding a Railroad Fatality”

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary, my name is Adam Goode. I’m the Legislative and Political Director of the Maine AFL-CIO. We represent 40,000 working people in the state of Maine. We work to improve the lives and working conditions of our members and all working people. We testify in support of LD 1824.

There are a number of railway workers that are a part of the over 200 unions affiliated with the Maine AFL-CIO. This bill was brought to us by the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen (BLET), who perform dangerous work involving heavy machinery, exposure to moving trains, and potential for mechanical failures or accidents. Railroad workers face significant pressures from railroads to work longer hours, potentially leading to fatigue and increased risk of errors.

In addition to the risks associated with constantly working around moving trains, railroad workers have reported facing situations related to harassment, which you will hear further details about in testimony today. Trains can travel at high speeds and are difficult to stop quickly, posing a significant risk of accidents. In subsequent testimony today you will hear about a young female engineer who struck an 18-year-old female trespasser making a TikTok video, using the approaching train as a backdrop. The intoxicated trespasser was subsequently killed. After family and friends of the deceased obtained the engineer's personal information, they began to harass her. They vandalized her home, wrote “murderer” on her vehicle, and viciously attacked her on social media. After eventually moving to a new home, the engineer was eventually able to end the harassment.

This is just one example of an incident that has happened many times over the years. We remind the committee that workers suffer harm that is irreparable when they partake in events like this and should not face further abuse in the wake of such events. For these reasons, we are supportive of legislation to protect the names of railroad workers involved in such incidents so long as they remain recorded for posterity and accessible to the parties that need them.

We urge you to vote “ought to pass”