



**Testimony of Marks Against LD 1949**

**"An Act Regarding Energy Fairness"**

**Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology**

**132<sup>nd</sup> Legislature**

**May 15, 2025**

Senator Lawrence, Representative Sachs, and distinguished members of the Committee, I am Matt Marks, a Principal at Cornerstone Government Affairs, and here on behalf of the Associated General Contractors of Maine (AGC Maine). AGC Maine opposes the bill as written, but specifically Part D.

AGC Maine currently manages an extensive education and apprenticeship program. It has experienced substantial growth in recent years. The program includes both pre-apprentice and apprentice education, including an innovative program that introduces construction crafts to high school students.

Maine passed the Green New Deal in 2021, and the Maine Department of Labor (DOL) established rules one year later, in January 2022. Just yesterday, the Labor Committee passed an additional requirement for developers and energy contractors to review and sign a fact sheet provided by the Department on laws and regulations associated with energy development. While the Department has existing resources, this will be an added component for the new laws and regulations. We believe that changing the apprenticeship percentages is not only premature but also challenging.

Today, as this Committee is aware, many projects that meet the threshold for apprenticeship regulations are remote, and this is especially true for larger projects. The location should be a consideration, as it becomes challenging to maintain the appropriate level of staffing over an extended period for any project, but more so for those rural projects where workers are further from home. That creates a reduced labor pool and certainly impacts the new apprentices who are beginning to learn a craft.

The change from the percentage of workers to the rate of work hours is significant. Estimating projects has become much more advanced, but calculating the hours worked to meet this requirement is not a simple task. Considering the task, the project is comprised of a prime contractor and subcontractors. Ensuring that the project meets the work hour percentages will incur additional costs for management, both on-site and off-site, including vendor support. Since projects are subject to various conditions, including constructability, weather, soil conditions, and engineering modifications, the total hours will have a moving target. Since meeting the suggested percentages will require compliance, the prime and subcontractors will need to protect their interests. Because some apprentices are available in specific crafts but limited in others, this consideration will need to be taken into account in project planning. The project should be managed by the plans and desired outcomes, rather than considering additional resources to meet the hours outlined in this bill.

We urge you to vote against this bill.