



Mike Tipping
Senator, District 8

THE MAINE SENATE
132nd Legislature

3 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333

Representative Roeder, and fellow members of the Joint Standing Committee on Labor:
I am here today to present LD 1993, An Act to Increase the Annual Cap on Funds Assessed for the Safety Education and Training Fund.

The Safety Education and Training Fund was established to support workplace safety education, training, and technical assistance programs administered by the Department of Labor. These programs provide no-cost training to workers and employers, including OSHA-10, fall prevention, supervisory safety training, and other courses addressing common workplace hazards.

The Fund is supported by an annual assessment based on paid workers' compensation benefits, excluding medical payments. Current law caps that assessment at 1 percent of total paid benefits in the most recent year for which data is available.

LD 1993 would amend that cap from 1 percent to 2 percent. The assessment would remain tied to actual paid benefits and would continue to be applied proportionately across insurers and self-insured employers. The bill does not change the structure of the assessment or create a new funding mechanism.

The Department of Labor has advised that assessment revenue has remained relatively flat for more than a decade, while the costs associated with delivering training, updating materials, travel, and staffing have not decreased at the same time. As a result, the Department has experienced increasing constraints in its ability to maintain training volume and respond to emerging workplace hazards.

LD 1993 provides the Department with additional flexibility to maintain existing safety education and training capacity within the existing assessment framework. It does not require an automatic increase and does not mandate any specific assessment level.

The Department will provide additional information regarding program utilization, the fiscal impacts associated with the Safety Education and Training Fund, and any other information this committee finds helpful in the work session.

I respectfully request the Committee's consideration and support of LD 1993.

Thank you.