

Maine Labor Climate Council testimony in support of LD 307

Senator Lawrence, Representative Sachs, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities, and Technology, my name is Scott Cuddy and I'm the Director of Policy for the Maine Labor Climate Council (MLCC). The MLCC is an affiliation of 16 private and public sector unions and we seek to fight Climate Change while producing good union jobs.

We are here today to voice our support for LD 307, Resolve, to Establish the Maine Artificial Intelligence Data Center Coordination Council.

Data Centers, throughout the country, have received mixed reviews. On the one hand, they can bring hundreds of millions of dollars into the local economy through their construction. On the other hand, they have been said to raise electricity prices and consume enormous amounts of water.

The Commission proposed would study the issues that we've seen arise in other parts of the country to ensure that, if a data center is going to be built in Maine, it will be done in a way that benefits Mainers. We can have the good jobs that come from building these centers, as well as protect Mainers from some of the negative impacts we've seen in other parts of the country.

The one thing I would ask the committee to consider when this Commission reports back to you is that those of us that make our living turning screws, running conduit, pouring concrete, and hanging steel need to build things to work. All of us want a Maine we can afford to live in, but a job in construction is one of the last refuges where a high school diploma can still get a person a good wage, health insurance, and a decent retirement.

I look forward to the work that this Commission will do to balance our need to have lives we can afford, with the need for working people to have jobs.

Thank you for your time and attention. I hope the committee will vote Ought To Pass on this bill, and I'm happy to take any questions you might have.