



TESTIMONY OF HELEN WALTER-TERRINONI
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ON BEHALF OF
THE AIR-CONDITIONING, HEATING, AND REFRIGERATION INSTITUTE

BEFORE THE MAINE LEGISLATURE
COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES

HEARING ON LD 226/HP 0161

MARCH 15, 2021

Good morning Chair Brenner, Chair Tucker and members of the Committee on Environment and Natural Resources. My name is Helen Walter-Terrinoni and I am the Vice President of Regulatory Affairs for the Air-Conditioning, Heating, and Refrigeration Institute (AHRI). Thank you for allowing me to speak with you today about LD 226 and its efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from high-global warming potential refrigerants in the State of Maine.

AHRI represents more than 300 manufacturers of air conditioning, heating, and commercial refrigeration equipment. It is an internationally recognized advocate for the HVACR industry and certifies the performance of many of the products manufactured by its members. In North America, the annual economic activity resulting from the HVACR industry is approximately \$256 billion. In the United States alone, AHRI member companies, along with distributors, contractors, and technicians, employ more than 1.3 million people.

As members of the Committee may be aware, the AHRI-supported *American Innovation and Manufacturing Act (AIM Act)* enacted into law on December 27, 2020 as a part of the omnibus/COVID-19 relief package gives the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency express authority to phase down the consumption and production of hydrofluorocarbons, or HFCs, including refrigerants. The passage of the AIM Act represents a tremendous victory for both industry and the environmental community, both of which share a mutual goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions from HFCs.

As currently drafted, LD 226 will reinforce some of the requirements that will be included in the forthcoming federal regulations that will phase down HFCs across multiple sectors and end uses. However, LD 226 is missing one critical component. For the transition to take place in a timely manner – both for the end uses regulated by LD 226 and those that will be regulated under the federal regulations – state building codes need to be updated to allow for the use of the new, low-global warming potential refrigerants that will replace the HFCs being phased down.

To that end, AHRI would like to offer a friendly amendment that will simply clarify that building codes cannot prohibit the use of refrigerants that have been approved by EPA, as long as the equipment is listed and installed in accordance with the relevant safety standards. The full text of proposed amendment reads as follows:

“Code provisions shall not prohibit the use of refrigerants listed as acceptable under section 7671k of the federal Clean Air Act (42 U.S. Code 7671k), provided equipment is listed and installed in accordance with the use conditions imposed within section 7671k.”

This seemingly minor addition will provide industry with the certainty needed to comply with both state and federal HFC regulations. It provides clarity that will ensure the transition is safe and efficient, while also directly benefiting Mainers by enabling the state to achieve the greenhouse gas emission reduction potential resulting from the transition away from HFCs. More simply said, the proposed amendment language is a prerequisite to making all of LD 226 and the broader phasedown of HFCs possible in Maine.

We are pleased to share that the federal transition will shrink U.S. annual greenhouse gas emissions by around 2.4 billion metric tons of carbon dioxide by 2036, while simultaneously creating upwards of 33,000 new U.S. manufacturing jobs. LD 226, with the addition of this friendly amendment, represents a win for both the environment and the economy.

Thank you again for the opportunity to present testimony at this hearing. We would also like to thank staff at the Department of Environmental Protection for hearing our concerns ahead of this hearing and being open to our suggestions. AHRI would be happy to fully support LD 226 should the Committee be able to include the friendly amendment proposed in this testimony.

AHRI looks forward to continuing to work with the Committee and the Maine Legislature on the recommended amendment contained in this testimony, so we can continue to be partners in supporting and achieving the phase down of high-global warming potential HFCs.