



# **MAINE AFL-CIO**

**A Union of Unions Standing for Maine Workers**  
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## **Testimony of Maine AFL-CIO Legislative & Political Director, Adam Goode, In Opposition to LD 126, "An Act To Allow a Journeyman Electrician To Supervise Three Helper Electricians"**

Senator Curry, Representative Roberts and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Innovation, Development, Economic Advancement and Business, 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 opposition to LD 126.

Working people, whether black, brown or white, deserve the opportunity to earn a living at jobs marked by safe staffing and high road training opportunities. Working people do best when safety and training are treated with the utmost importance.

People who work as electricians are exposed to safety threats that can be quite literally a life and death matter. Union members of IBEW locals put their high levels of training to use keeping the power on during storms and building public and private structures in our state.

This bill changes the number of helper electricians who may be supervised by a journeyman electrician. Current law states that a journeyman may supervise 2 apprentice electricians or 2 helper electricians who are enrolled in a certain educational program or one helper electrician. This bill eliminates the option to supervise 2 helper electricians enrolled in an educational program and allows a journeyman to supervise three helper electricians.

We are strongly opposed to both of these changes. A helper who is not in an educational program doesn't learn the Code. They may or may not be able to do the math associated with electrical work. This makes for a serious safety issue. It is far too dangerous to have a journeyman supervising more than one helper electrician.

A Journeyman or Master electrician has their own work to do. We believe that simply putting extra bodies on the jobsite is not always helpful. A Journeyman or Master can do this work and supervise one apprentice or helper. Expecting a Journeyman or Master electrician to perform their job well, to be safe and to effectively supervise more than one individual is dangerous.

We know there are issues related to workforce development. That is why we oppose eliminating the option to supervise two helper electricians who are enrolled in or have completed a program of study consisting of 576 hours of education as approved by the board or an accredited institution. This work is important, and therefore deserves the investment and support leading to quality jobs providing in such educational programs.

For those reasons we ask that you oppose LD 126.