

Testimony of Simon West for The Maine State Chamber of Commerce In Support of  
L.D. 149 An Act to Facilitate Licensure for Credentialed Individuals from Other Jurisdictions

March 23, 2021

Senator Curry, Representative Roberts, and members of the Committee on Innovation, Development, Economic Advancement and Business

My name is Simon West from Gardiner and I represent the Maine State Chamber of Commerce, a statewide business organization made up of both large and small businesses, here to provide you with our written testimony in support of L.D. 149, An Act to Facilitate Licensure for Credentialed Individuals from Other Jurisdictions.

At the State Chamber we stand behind legislation such as this that supports the Governor's 10 year economic plan. Part of that plan is to grow the state's talent pool to meet employer needs. There are two basic means to fill workforce gaps. The workforce can be raised and educated here, or it can be transplanted from elsewhere. This bill focuses on the latter.

**This bill helps address several goals for Maine's economy:**

First it assists in growing Maine's workforce. This will close current workforce gaps while bracing us for the future. With trends in both process and technology advancement Maine is positioned to be creating jobs in new and expanding industries while still attempting to fill jobs in our current industries. Both needs must be addressed.

Secondly, as Maine attempts to bring diversity and equity to a homogeneous workforce, decreasing barriers for foreign professionals to come to our great state will undoubtedly work toward that goal.

Lastly, studies indicate that for service and low skill sectors of an economy people follow the jobs. When it comes to highly skilled and specialized sectors of an economy jobs follow the people. Part of this bill focuses on workers with advanced degrees and professional licenses. Bringing those people here when they could be going anywhere will open our state to new opportunities, attracting high paying employers and growing underrepresented sectors of our

economy. Adding high paying employers and highly paid individuals to our economy will stimulate our other industries, especially hospitality, an industry hard hit by COVID-19 and in need of our support.

In closing, this bill not only aims to expand our current workforce but compels coordination with licensing agencies to protect consumers and keep adequate standards for performance and knowledge. It is in our best interest to make entering Maine's workforce a simpler process, reducing burdens and barriers that are irrelevant to the prospective worker's knowledge, skills, and abilities.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide you with our written testimony.