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Commercial/Industrial - Design/Build Mechanical Contracting Specialists

**Testimony of Matthew R Daigle in Opposition to LD 1691**

*An Act To Require Licensing for Certain Mechanical Trades*

Joint Standing Committee on Innovation, Development, Economic Advancement and Business  
May 13, 2021 9:30 AM

My name is Matthew Daigle. I am a resident of Carmel, Maine and I am here today to testify against LD 1691. I am the Director of Human Resources and Safety for ABM Mechanical. We are a Plumbing, Mechanical, HVAC, and Electrical Contractor.

I am writing to this First Special Session – 2021 with regards to Legislative Document 1691. In reading this Act to require licensing for certain mechanical trades I have significant concerns I felt should be shared. In our current state of hiring trades professionals for the work we do, it is a struggle to find people that have gone to school or want to put the time into the job to obtain / maintain licenses, pay for additional licenses to do a job. There are many other jobs that someone can work at that don't require this level of licensing. ABM Mechanical works with Maine's Community College system and High School Vocational Centers to encourage students to stay with their desire to pick a trade as a career. To hire students that are between their 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> year of trade school and give them the opportunity to grow and learn more about their trade, help them pay for their education, prepare them for their future. It is something that benefits the student, the trade, and ABM if they continue to work for ABM after graduation.

When you also factor in that in the United States, the average age of a plumber is 40 years old, and Maine in 2018, the office of the Attorney General reported that the average age of plumbing and heating contractors is over 55. We are now in 2021, by adding additional requirements than are already part of Maine Professional Licensing is going to potentially cripple the trades in Maine even further.

I feel this bill should not be passed because it will add a burden to the people that work in the trades that are listed as part of the bill, the State Agencies that will have to administer and monitor these licenses and the economy of our great state as when the cost of new buildings or renovating old buildings will increase because the companies that perform these trades will be forced to increase the cost of doing business to recruit, hire and maintain a workforce that will be negatively impacted by these new legal requirements. I grew up in a papermill town that is now in ruin and over 4,000 Maine residents that worked there are now either out of work or have left our state to find work. Part of the downfall of the paper industry in Maine, in my opinion, is due to what I see this bill doing by introducing an "Organized Labor" model into the trades effected by LD1691. Do we want to create an environment that makes it even harder for Maine's labor force to meet the needs of our State's unnecessary requirements to go to work. Not to mention make it more difficult for Maine contractors to find employees to build Maine's Business needs, Maine's economic needs?



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I want to thank all the member of the committee for giving me the opportunity to present my thoughts on LD1691.

I can be reached anytime to follow up with my concerns.

Matthew R Daigle

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