



# **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 Support of LD 1691, “An Act To Require Licensing for Certain Mechanical Trades”**

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 support of LD 1691.

LD 1691 sets out a framework to license people who perform sheet metal work, install and repair refrigeration and air conditioning systems and who work in pipefitting, mechanical insulating and fire protection sprinkler system installation, repair and testing. Many working people who are members of local unions affiliated with the Maine AFL-CIO work in these trades. They have told us that their working conditions include serious and legitimate issues related to health, safety and quality control in mechanical work that licensing programs would address.

The current system is made up of a patchwork of national and third-party certifications and benchmarks for work in these mechanical trades. Licensing programs could help improve safety by rolling existing appropriate requirements in with additional guidelines. Revenue generated from a licensing program can help fund monitoring and enforcement. This helps to protect lives and both public and private property.

One of the major concerns from people in these trades is that it is very common to be working on a jobsite alongside someone that is not licensed and likely does not have the same level of training related to knowing how to perform the job safely. A licensure process will help working people in the mechanical trades have the comfort that those they are working with are prepared for the job at hand.

A pipefitter is exposed to dangers through their use of welding torches, sharp cutting tools and hazardous materials that can cause fires or explosions. Pipefitters face safety issues from other heavy machinery and workers on the job site, including cranes, forklifts, and trench accidents. For an HVAC technician, protection is needed from electrical safety hazards and chemical exposure. The risk of fatal injury for those working in welding, cutting and brazing is more than four per thousand workers over a working lifetime.

Your support for these bills will move a process along that will help both union and open shops in the construction industry. This will help working people in the pipefitting, sprinkler fitting, insulating, sheet metal and heavy equipment trades. We ask that you to vote ought to pass on LD 1691.