

May 13, 2021

To: The Committee on Innovation, Development, Economic Advancement and Business

RE: **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 Stacey Keefer, I am submitting this testimony in my capacity as the Director for the Maine Marine Trades Association (MMTA). MMTA represents over 120 Maine businesses and an industry comprised of boatyards, boat builders, marinas, boat dealers, marine retailers, and other service providers.

On behalf of the members of MMTA, I would like to extend concern for this bill that aims to require licenses for specified trades. First, we would like to note that the good intentions of the bill add another layer of bureaucracy and cost to doing business at a time when workforce shortages are holding back our economic growth –especially in the trades. We urge the Committee to consider if these requirements could in any way deter more workers from entering the trades when we are so desperate to hire and are willing to train.

Second, the marine industry already uses standards and certifications from the American Boat and Yacht Council (ABYC) specific to marine systems for air conditioning, refrigeration, and fire suppression. These systems are often unique to marine applications and may operate using low voltage electrical systems. The ABYC standards are recognized globally for the design, construction, maintenance, and repair of recreational boats. If passed, would the Mechanical Trades Board recognize appropriate ABYC examinations for marine tradespeople?

We appreciate the inclusion of reciprocity and the inclusion of grandfathering for current master technicians, but again urge the Committee to consider whether all these licensing requirements could affect people considering jobs in the trades. We cannot afford to deter any potential new employees.

Respectfully,  
Stacey Keefer  
Maine Marine Trades Association, Executive Director