

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF

L.D. 2133 – AS AMENDED

AN ACT TO EXPAND THE USE OF CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION CENTERS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE ELECTRICIAN WORKFORCE

Senator Curry, Representative Roberts and members of the Innovation, Development, Economic Advancement and Business Committee. I am Steven Bailey, executive director of the Maine School Management Association, testifying on behalf of the legislative committees of the Maine School Boards Association and Maine School Superintendents Association, in support of L.D. 2133 as amended.

There is a documented shortage of licensed electricians and the demand for them is only going to increase, as more residents install heat pumps and solar panels to reduce their dependence on electricity from the grid, or reliance upon fossil fuel sources.

The governor's office has a goal of doubling the clean energy workforce from an estimated 14,500 to 30,000 by the end of the decade.

This bill recognizes the need and the ability of career and technical education (CTE) centers to help train students to help them qualify for taking the license examination. The bill will give them partial credit toward the necessary work hours required.

We see this as a win-win situation. It provides students with a more direct and practical path to entering the workforce. Instead of just learning theoretical concepts, they can immediately apply their skills and knowledge in a real-world setting.

It also promotes the idea that education should be aligned with the needs of the job market. By allowing students to earn certifications, CTE schools are better preparing them for the demands of their chosen industries. It's a practical and efficient way to bridge the gap between education and employment.

We see it as a win for students getting ready to join the workforce and for people needing a qualified electrician.