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Testimony in Support of LD 2133 (“An Act to Expand the Use of Career and Technical Education Centers in the Development of the Electrician Workforce”)

J. Andrew Cashman on behalf of the Maine Association of REALTORS®

January 23, 2024

Senator Pierce, Representative Gere and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Innovation, Development, Economic Advancement and Business, my name is Andy Cashman. I am the Founder of Resolve Government Relations. We represent the Maine Association of REALTORS®, a professional trade association established in 1936 with over 6,500 members statewide. REALTORS® grow Maine’s economy and build Maine communities. Our members represent buyers and sellers involved in both residential and commercial real estate transactions. Our membership also includes industry affiliates, such as lenders, closing agents, title agents, appraisers, building inspectors, surveyors, etc. The Maine Association is chartered by the National Association of REALTORS® (NAR), the largest trade association in the country.

The Maine Association of REALTORS® supports LD 2133. The bill proposes to streamline electrician licensure by recognizing course work as training time for purposes of qualifying for licensure. Maine needs more skilled tradespeople, including electricians. As advocates for housing and private property rights, we understand all the pieces that contribute to available inventory, owning property and the impacts of instability in industry overall. Skilled trades are critical for the housing industry and the base of economic stability for both today and tomorrow. They are the driving force behind successful development and maintenance of existing structures. Tradespeople ensure that we have safe and habitable places to live and pave the way for new properties to be developed.

According to a [Maine Housing study from October 2023](#), one contributing factor to our housing shortage is an aging workforce. Incentives and ways to streamline more tradespeople into Maine’s workforce should be supported. This bill would increase accessibility for many aiming to enter our workforce and aid in the development and maintenance of properties that are so badly needed.

LD 2133 is one small piece of the enormous affordable housing puzzle: we do not have enough tradespeople to build the housing we need in the time we need it. Construction often sits on hold waiting for the next needed trade to become available before the remainder of the project may progress. The more tradespeople we have the shorter these delays will be. LD 2133 may enable more electricians to be licensed safely, so that electrical work can be done more efficiently, and housing can be brought to market faster. This is a crucial step in the right direction to addressing Maine’s housing and workforce needs. For these reasons, we support LD 2133 and respectfully urge you to vote Ought to Pass. Thank you for your time and consideration.



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