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LD 1748

I am writing to express my opposition to LD 1748, HP 1166, "An Act to Enhance Businesses' Understanding of Labor Standards and Grow Maine's Energy Economy Through a Training Program," sponsored by Rep. Matthew Beck of South Portland.

Concerns with LD 1748

While I support the goal of ensuring fair labor standards and promoting Maine's energy economy, I have serious concerns about the approach outlined in this bill:

Increased Regulatory Burden: LD 1748 requires the Maine Department of Labor to develop a comprehensive training program for entities planning to develop energy projects. This introduces a new regulatory requirement for businesses, adding complexity and potential delays to project development.

Mandatory Certification and Penalties: The bill establishes criteria for the training program, imposes fees for certificates of completion, and sets penalties for failure to hold a certificate. These requirements could disproportionately affect small businesses and local developers who may lack the resources to quickly adapt to new mandates.

Economic Impact and Barriers to Entry: By mandating participation in a state-run training program and imposing penalties, LD 1748 risks creating barriers to entry for new businesses and increasing costs for existing ones. This could slow down the growth of Maine's energy sector, contrary to the bill's stated intent.

Redundancy with Existing Standards: Many businesses already comply with federal and state labor standards. Adding another layer of mandatory training may be redundant and unnecessarily burdensome.

Alternative Approaches

Rather than mandating participation in a state-developed training program, I urge the committee to consider:

Voluntary training and education initiatives, possibly incentivized rather than required.

Targeted outreach to businesses most in need of support, rather than a one-size-fits-all mandate.

Collaboration with existing industry groups and educational institutions to leverage current resources.

Conclusion

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the committee to vote "Ought Not to Pass" on LD 1748, HP 1166. Thank you for your attention to my testimony and for your service to the people of Maine.