

Jean Ginn Marvin  
Scarborough

Senator Hickman, Representative Sylvester and Members of the Labor and Housing Committee

My name is Jean Ginn Marvin. I reside in Scarborough and I am here to testify in strong opposition to LD 553 An Act To End At-Will Employment.

I am employed as the Innkeeper at the Nonantum Resort in Kennebunkport. We are a seaside resort established in 1884 and owned by 10 members of my family. We have 109 rooms and 4 food outlets and on a seasonal basis employ up to 200 workers. On a year-round basis there are about 16 of us, meaning that seasonal layoffs are a way of life for us all.

LD 553 would completely decimate a business I have spent the past 23 years building. We pride ourselves on expecting a lot from our team, and they in turn expect a lot of us. One of the foundations of who we are as an organization and as a Maine based family is that we are a work family. We take care of each other. LD 553 would allow members of our Nonantum Family to do less than their best, and still be allowed to be part of our team. This flies in the face of our values as an organization. For example if an employee arrived and started throwing around racial slurs to a guest or fellow worker, in my opinion, that person should be quickly and permanently removed. There is no place at The Nonantum Resort for that kind of conversation. As a business we should be allowed to take immediate action when inappropriate behavior takes place. Our Team and our guests certainly deserve this respect. Should government really be allowed to tell me who I can and can't have as a member of my team regardless of behavior? I think not.

I would like to tell you that following a three-step warning discipline policy would result in a meaningful conversation and a respectful signing of paperwork but my experience would tell me that would not be the case. Most people who are informed that they are being terminated storm out. The idea of getting them to sign a document outlining poor work practices is frankly unworkable.

Seasonal Hospitality businesses are just barely staying alive following last years pandemic and the idea of adding this burdensome regulation to a deck that is already stacked against us is a recipe for disaster. Of course we are going to make a plan for seasonal layoffs and message it in an appropriate manner. There is an unbelievable shortage of workers in this state, so if we were not respectful of our workers, they certainly would not be coming back year after year. However at The Nonantum that is exactly how our business runs.

This concept, while well-meaning is an inappropriate over reach of government. I urge you to vote "Ought Not To Pass" on LD 553.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak and I am happy to take any questions.

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