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COMMISSIONER

To: Senator Craig Hickman, Chair
Representative Mike Sylvester, Chair
Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Labor and Housing

From: Isaac H. Gingras, Legislative Liaison, Maine Department of Labor

Date: April 9, 2021

Re: L.D. 1231, An Act Concerning Climate and Community Investment Projects

While we were unable to attend the public hearing, I am sending this letter on behalf of the Department of Labor to provide additional information, neither for nor against, L.D. 1231, An Act Concerning Climate and Community Investment Projects.

The Department understands and appreciates the goals this bill seeks to achieve. We have been working with the sponsor and others on the language and we appreciate the amendments offered so far. There are a few elements in the bill that we would like to flag that could use additional clarification. These areas noted below would provide additional clarity for the Department in terms of implementing such a proposal. For this reason, we would be happy to continue working with the sponsor on the proposal and would be happy to attend a future work session in order to discuss how the purposes of the bill can best be achieved.

There are several portions of the bill that the Department has noted as needing additional clarification. The term "disadvantaged community" in the proposed legislation would need further clarification in statute. As of right now, it would be difficult to pull together the information to identify these specific individuals.

Additional language clarification would be helpful in Section 2 where it refers to an "entity." It is unclear who this language refers to.

Another point that should be noted is the broadness of workforce development, which would refer to many programs typically funded using WIOA funds. We believe that was not the intent of the sponsor and would be willing to assist with crafting appropriate language. The Department would also note that there are requirements for apprentices under Title 26 Ch.43, Apprenticeship in Energy Facility Construction.

Lastly, the Department is still reviewing the legislation but would be more than willing to work with the sponsor and any interested parties on this proposal.

Thank you very much for the consideration of my letter. I will be happy to join you for the work session on this bill and answer any questions you may have.