



**Testimony of Tim Ouellette**  
**AGAINST LD 1231**  
**“An Act Concerning Climate and Community Investment Projects.”**  
**Friday, April 9, 2021, 10:00 AM**  
**Joint Standing Committee on Labor and Housing**

Senator Hickman, Representative Sylvester, and the members of the Joint Standing Committee on Labor and Housing, my name is Tim Ouellette. I am a resident of Scarborough and co-owner of CPM Constructors in Freeport. I am speaking to you in opposition to the amended bill.

Since 1985, CPM Constructors has grown to more than 120 employees and completed bridge, road, earth, utility, railroad, and marine work throughout Maine and Northern New England. We have also completed renewable energy projects, including a tidal power generation installation in eastern Maine. We earned a national award for the project, and within a month of completing this work, the system sent power to the grid and became the first commercial, grid-connected tidal energy project to be built in the United States.

Our business model at CPM Constructors is considered “open shop,” since the relationship between the employer and employee is a direct - we as owners have a personal and direct relationship with our employees. We prefer this relationship because it builds a culture where we grow as a team. As people remain with our company and move job to job, they can build a career with good benefits, safety training and the opportunity for new and different challenges. That decision to operate in this way should not preclude us from bidding work in the renewable energy market. I hope the Committee understands our model, and also understands that this model represents the vast majority of Maine-based firms.

CPM Constructors would face a severe disadvantage if the state mandates a project labor agreement for renewable energy projects – or any construction projects for that matter. By nature, this requirement introduces a third party that can dictate conditions we must follow. This does not directly benefit our employees, but provides funding to a retirement fund they will likely never access if they remain with our company. It is important to note that project labor agreements do not recognize our existing benefits, including retirement, but simply force a payment to the respective union in each craft.

Additionally, the mandate that every craft performed adopt an apprenticeship is not practical. It assumes that a company will have an open position for each craft on a particular job. If a company has existing skilled workers, the company would be prevented under this new law from bidding on a project.

Finally, since the majority of construction firms in Maine are open shop, a project labor agreement would benefit out of state firms and out of state workers who are members of a union, since those people would have an advantage on any project bid under this bill. I do not believe your intention would be to take work away from Mainers and Maine companies, but that is the reality.

CPM Constructors is in our 36<sup>th</sup> year of business. It is discouraging to encounter initiatives that would prevent a good company from bidding work they are qualified to do. I encourage you to vote against this bill and allow companies like CPM Constructors to work in our home state of Maine. Thank you for your time.