

Grant Provost
Ironworkers Local 7

Good Morning Senator Hickman, Representative Sylvester and esteemed members of the Labor and Housing Committee. My name is Grant Provost I am the Business Agent for Ironworkers Local 7 in the State of Maine. I serve on two workforce boards, the Maine State Work Force Board and the Western and Central Maine Workforce Board. I am also a member of the AFL-CIO Executive Board. I rise in full support of LD 1231 An Act Concerning Climate and Community Investment Projects. This piece of legislation will help usher in a new economy that is not only equitable for our citizens but will mandate that the transition from fossil fuels will be a just one. For one the call require prevailing wage will lift thousands of workers in construction out of poverty. It will enable the family members of all tradespeople union or non union to put food on the table, hold jobs that turn into careers and earn enough to have a savings for the future. This is not the atmosphere currently in the State where General Contractors squeeze every last bit of profit out of there subs intern, driving wages down. With 6 of the 16 counties in Maine well above 15% poverty rate we can't afford the status quo any longer. I see this first hand when organizing members mostly from the reinforcing side. Workers who put in over 60 hours a week and still qualify for Maine Care. Workers well into there later parts of their careers who have not a single cent for retirement and are looking at being laid off or forced out by younger new hires. After a career of supplying their employers with millions of dollars in profits they have nothing but what Social Security can hand them to live on and the realization that they will soon be on state funded aid for the rest of their life. When a project at least requires prevailing wage you create a market where companies that pay health insurance, provide retirement and pay a living wage can compete. Currently you would have a hard time finding anyone to work in your home for anything under \$40 dollars an hour, why would we think it is ok for a construction worker working on a wind tower foundation to make \$15 or less. You and I will be making that number \$40 an hour later on if not more when we are paying for that employees families healthcare, their food and their retirement. My son is going to be the 7th generation of my family brought up here in Maine, more than anything this is about his future as it is about all our children and the kind of Maine we want for them. It's about a fair economy where the switch to a carbon neutral electrical grid does not lead to the elimination of the working class. We have an opportunity like no other generation before us, we need to seize the moment and make sure that future generations can benefit from our braveness today. This is why I urge you to vote out to pass.