

CIANBRO



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THE CONSTRUCTION ASSOCIATION



MAINE
AGGREGATE ASSOCIATION

Testimony of Pete Vigue regarding LD-1231, “An Act Concerning Climate and Community Investment Projects” (April 9, 2021)

Senator Hickman, Representative Sylvester and respective members of the Joint Standing Committee on Labor and Housing, my name is Pete Vigue, I am a resident of Pittsfield. I began my career with Cianbro as a laborer in the crew 51 years ago. At that time, we had 150 team members working for the company. Today, as Chairman, I cannot express, how proud I am of our 100% employee owned, open shop company, and the 4,000 owners, we call team members who self-perform construction services in 41 states across the United States. We remain based out of Pittsfield, ME and have offices throughout Maine and the US.

It is my honor today to speak on behalf and represent the Associated Builders and Contractors of Maine (ABC), Associated General Contractors of Maine (AGC), and the Maine Aggregate Association (MAA). Together these construction associations represent 551 Maine member companies and approximately 37,000 Maine construction workers. Together, united, we are in opposition to LD-1231.

The Governor has set a very aggressive climate decarbonization goal for the State of Maine. According to the Maine Climate Council’s report issued this past December, the chief goal of the *Maine Won’t Wait* report is to achieve carbon neutrality by 2045. Regardless of your perspective about climate change, this goal will be a tremendous accomplishment if met.

One thing I’ve learned in my 51 years in the industry, the only way we will meet this goal is if we work together. We cannot afford to divide ourselves and unfortunately, LD-1231 is more dividing than it is uniting.

At Cianbro, our success is the result of working together with others. Every meeting room in our company across the United States has a placard that reads, **No One Is Smarter Than All of Us.** Although, we choose to perform our work open shop and we believe in the free enterprise system, we do not discriminate. Today, we have union sub-contractors who work side by side with us on our projects here in the State of Maine. The current model works and is successful. Why? Because we have a common goal and a common understanding. These associations and the Maine companies they represent believe in the free enterprise system.

Ask yourselves, why would we ever require a PLA? Shouldn't all contractors have the right to bid these work opportunities and the successful contractor perform the work based on their own philosophy regardless if they are open shop or union? Isn't that inclusiveness? LD-1231's attempt at requiring or incentivizing PLAs for government subsidized energy projects is not benefiting the State of Maine, it is not inclusive and in fact discriminates. PLAs are nothing more than a wedge that will continue to divide us.

We are one Maine. We must continue to work together, side by side as we do today.

This is the Maine I know and the Maine I'm proud to call home. Not one that discriminates and divides. When we work together, we all win. When we begin to divide and exclude Maine companies from work opportunities, the workforce will come from out of state, taking away Maine jobs from Maine citizens and the earnings from those putting the work in place will leave the state with those employees who came here to work. Ultimately, the consumer pays more. Are these the outcomes we are looking for?

Regarding paying the prevailing wage, there is a well-established process in place today that we all must live by when public works projects are funded by the State. In fact, most companies here in Maine already pay more than the current established prevailing rates. The existing prevailing wage framework is a far preferable method for making sure jobs stay in Maine rather than limiting the job pool to contractors from out of State.

In addressing workforce development. No one understands the workforce shortage of skilled trade professionals better than the contractors here in the state. This bill's apprenticeship goal that mandates programs for every craft the contractor employs, regardless of whether the craft

is engaged on the project is not the solution. We all support lifelong learning and we all want a safe, competent workforce. There is no doubt the apprenticeship model is successful, but it is not the only model. When we mandate how a company should develop its workforce, we discriminate. Most of Maine's small construction companies have effective workforce development programs other than apprenticeships. At Cianbro, we are committed to continuing education and apprenticeship. We have federal and state registered apprenticeships as well as non-registered programs. We successfully develop talent within all of these models and even work with others to assist them in their workforce development efforts. We believe in the apprenticeship model as one form of workforce development. However, we also believe we cannot afford to limit our educational offerings; we must support and promote multiple pathways of education and workforce development to grow and sustain the workforce of the future.

We understand that the Maine construction industry is not made up of companies the size of Cianbro. Our State's construction industry is comprised of companies much smaller in scale. As we strive to meet our decarbonization goals, we need to be prudent in our decisions, ensure fairness and equity for all contractors regardless of size, be inclusive rather than divide and work together for the best interest of the citizens of Maine.

The companies I represent here are up to the challenge to see Maine achieve this goal. In fact, we see it as our responsibility to ensure that we can meet these goals safely, efficiently, economically, and satisfactorily.

The only way this will happen is if we treat everyone fairly in the process. LD-1231 does not currently meet that criteria.

On behalf of the associations I represent here today, I urge you to vote ought not to pass on LD-1231. Maine's clean energy future depends on it.

Thank you for your time and consideration of our position on this legislation.

I would be happy to answer any questions that you may have.

CIANBRO is a 100% employee-owned construction and construction services firm headquartered in Pittsfield, Maine, routinely operating in over forty States, employing nearly 4,200 team members; over 1,500 of which are Maine residents.

ABC Maine's mission is the advancement of the merit shop construction philosophy, which encourages open competition and a free-enterprise approach that awards contracts based solely on merit, regardless of labor affiliation. ABC represent 176 member companies with approximately 12,000 team members.

AGC of Maine is dedicated to ensuring a sound and healthy construction industry and providing the public with an assurance of the skill, responsibility, and integrity of AGC-member firms which are comprised of 200 member companies with approximately 15,000 team members.

Maine Aggregate Association's mission is to unite the aggregate industry to have representation of our interests throughout the regulatory process and to educate the public on the importance of the natural resources of sand and gravel, and dedicated to the promotion of health and safety of miners, associated industries and the families of both. We represent 175 member companies with approximately 10,000 team members.