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***Testimony in Support of L.D. 1436, "An Act
To Protect Certain Essential Workers from Infectious Disease"***

Senator Hickman, Representative Sylvester and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Labor & Housing, my name is Carl Anderson and I reside in the Town of Warren.

I am currently a District Vice President with the Professional Fire Fighters of Maine representing approximately 1000 full-time, career Firefighters, EMT's Paramedics, Inspectors, Dispatchers, and Mechanics across the State of Maine who belong to the International Association of Fire Fighters. I am also an eleven-year Veteran of the Rockland Fire Department and the Union president of Local 1584.

This morning, I am testifying today in support of LD 1436 which is an act to protect certain essential workers from infectious disease.

I would like to paint a picture for you. Imagine this concept, you wake up in the morning and see your family sitting around the breakfast table enjoying each other's company laughing and having a great day. As you leave to go to your work you go to get in your vehicle to take a long drive into your place of employment. When you reach back to put on a seatbelt you realize there isn't one there, the company that makes the car ran out of seatbelts, but you need to get to work and you need to make money to bring it home and support your loving family that is sitting at the breakfast table waiting for your return. What are you to do? Do you not continue your drive to work because you're worried about not being safe, no, you continue your journey to your place of employment knowing the risks of not being protected by the very thing that is going to help you in support of your family. Remember, your family doesn't know that you don't have seatbelts, they think that everybody does. Why in the world with a company make something without proper safety measures. If you get into an accident on your way to work what are the chances that you are coming home anymore, I'll give you that answer very easily, they are a lot bigger than if you had a seatbelt to keep you safe.

First responders go to our jobs every single day and put aside our own personal safety to keep our community healthy and safe. Worrying about having the proper protection while at a place of employment should never be an issue because just like we are taking care of our citizens, our town and our state is taking care of us.

The pandemic brought us into some very crazy and unprecedented times. In all my years riding a fire truck or in the back of an ambulance never did I think that I would not have proper PPE to enter a house that was either on fire or hazardous to my safety due to disease. but those times are here and they are being felt all around. Reusing PPE because of a shortage is not an option. I ask all of you, before vaccinations, if you were in a 4 x 5 room with a patient that had COVID-19 would you feel comfortable taking the mask that protected you and using it again? how about the gown that kept the droplets from affecting your skin? how about knowing that the very thing that

you're using to protect you could be the thing that makes you sick or makes you bring this home to your family.

First responders, healthcare workers and Frontline employees are here every day. They are here because it is their job to be here, they love what they do, and they want to take care of all of you. Do your part, support this bill that makes it so that any of the scenarios will not happen again, PPE will be in constant supply and then we can show all our first responders that we are here for them just as they are here for you.

Thank you everyone.