



**Testimony In Opposition To
LD 513, An Act Regarding Overtime Protections for Certain Maine Workers**

March 30, 2023

Senator Tipping, Representative Roeder, and Honorable Members of the Labor and Housing Committee,

My name is Alexander Price and I am before you today on behalf of the Maine Jobs Council. The Maine Jobs Council is a statewide, nonpartisan, member-driven advocacy organization that advances public policies to support the creation and preservation of foundational jobs in Maine. I am here today to testify in opposition to LD 513, An Act Regarding Overtime Protections for Certain Maine Workers.

We oppose LD 513 because it would increase the cost and burdens on employers at a time when most are already struggling. Maine's regulatory and business environments already rank among the lowest in the nation. We are 44th in the nation in overall economic ranking and 42nd in the nation in capital investment. Maine has the 3rd highest tax burden, the 9th highest healthcare costs, the 11th highest cost of living, and the 13th highest energy costs. Maine's overall economic ranking is the last in New England and if LD 513 passes, it will continue to put us at a disadvantage with the rest of the region.

Maine emerged from the pandemic as the most economically vulnerable state in the nation. We received that ranking due to our percentage of small businesses and their limited ability to cope, our aging workforce, and our dependence on tourism and retail. This legislation would continue to make things harder for all those struggling. What appears to be well-intentioned may do considerable harm to the people it aims to help.

The Maine Jobs Council supports making workers a top priority. The best way to do that is with a robust economy full of quality foundational jobs that provide choices, career growth, and increasing wages. This law would lead to just the reverse. Very few states set their overtime salary thresholds above the federal level. This would put Maine's small businesses at a disadvantage compared to larger businesses in Maine and businesses in other states that follow the federal salary threshold. Supporting working people is critical, but the important word is working. If our companies cannot compete, if money isn't invested here, if jobs stagnate or leave, then we will have more and more people who are no longer working people.

There is no substitute for good jobs and those jobs result from companies that compete successfully to provide goods and services. Maine cannot afford to be even more of an outlier than it already is. In fact, if we are going to truly improve the lives of Maine's working men and women, we need to help our employers be more competitive not less.

The MJC thanks the committee for its time and consideration of this issue, and we would welcome any opportunity to discuss it with you.

Thank you,

Alexander Price, Pierce Atwood
On behalf of the Maine Jobs Council