

**Testimony of Jackson Parker in Opposition to LD 373
“An Act to Ensure Maine Employer and Employee Harmony in Climate and Energy Jobs”**

Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology

February 6, 2024

Chair Senator Michael Tipping
Chair Representative Amy Roeder
Distinguished Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Labor and Housing

My name is Jackson Parker and I am Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Woolwich-based, Reed & Reed, a 96-year-old Maine construction company that is 100% owned by its employees. Our team of employee-owners has built or is building 408 of the 455 wind turbines in Maine. We have also built hundreds of transportation projects throughout Maine. None were built under a Project Labor Agreement or an Employee Harmony Agreement nor was anything like that needed for this work.

In a world where ratepayer and taxpayer costs matter, LD 373 would raise project costs because its union-only labor requirements exclude 90% of Maine construction workers and their employers. And we all know that the primary cost driver of electricity rates from renewable energy projects is the initial construction cost. Higher construction costs = higher electricity costs.

The same effect would occur for transportation projects: exclude 90% of Maine workers and 90% of Maine employers and costs would go up. Drastically.

Maine Biz Magazine lists Maine’s largest construction companies and you have to get all the way down to #13 before you find the one and only union company on the list. How could limiting competition by excluding over 90% of Maine contractors and 90% of Maine construction workers lead to lower costs and be in the interests of Maine ratepayers and taxpayers? It does not.

The premise of an “Employee Harmony Agreement” would be laughable if its potential harm is not so great. Doesn’t the purported need for “Harmony” presuppose that disharmony exists? Quite simply, no such thing does. If there was such disharmony, wouldn’t more than 10% of Maine construction workers look to join unions?

LD 373 is not even a solution in search of a problem. It is worse. LD 373 is a blatant attempt to use the machinery of government to enrich labor unions and penalize employee-owned companies like ours.

Other Maine construction companies that we know would not sign onto any such PLA or EHA. Nor would we. So, who would provide the management expertise, engineering skills, equipment resources, working capital, bonding capacity, and willingness to accept the business risks of building Maine’s infrastructure and renewable energy projects? No Maine construction companies that I know if there is a PLA or EHA.

Finally, I ask you: Is it the proper role of the legislature to exclude 90% of the Maine construction workers and employee-owned Maine companies from building renewable energy projects and transportation infrastructure? I think not.

I respectfully urge you to defeat LD 373. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Jackson A. Parker

Chairman & CEO

REED & REED



Darryl Coombs
Reed & Reed
LD 373

Submitting written testimony on behalf of Jackson Parker, CEO - Reed & Reed.

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Chairman & CEO