

Good afternoon Senator Baldacci, Representative Matlack and members of the Joint Standing Committee on State and Local Government, my name is Grant Provost I am the Business Agent for Ironworkers Local 7 in the State of Maine. I rise in favor of LD 1411 Buy American Build Maine Act For my trade in particular we see an in flux of steel erectors from out of state locations flooding the Maine market. Companies from New Hampshire and Vermont who can undercut local wages have been gobbling up the work in Portland, Maine as well as throughout the State. It has been difficult to compete with the low wages. Just in a one block area in the east end of Portland two of the biggest projects had zero companies from Maine. The Pre-cast parking job went to a NH based company, the structural iron went to a company out of Vermont and the foundation was done by a Massachusetts based company that was flying their construction workers up from Fall River. This on a project that is for a local brewery, the only local thing about the project is the General Contractor who subbed the job out to out of state companies who brought their out of state employees. One of these contractors did not register as a foreign entity with the Secretary of State or fill out the proper documentation to work in the State. I was on an organizing drive across the street talking to the structural ironworkers on that project, they were all from Virginia or North Carolina. Mainers and Maine companies are getting locked out of jobs in their home state by low paying out of state companies with poor safety records and pay so low that no company in this state can compete. This bill will help level that playing ground by requiring out of state companies to hire local as much as possible. This is important to help train the people of our state in the trades and to make our own self sufficient construction economy.

The contractors that Ironworkers Local 7 work with in Maine are either local or when they come from out of state they hire local. It is one of the great benefits to being a union signatory contractor. When you bid a job away from your base there is a readily available local workforce there to pull from. Your company can show up with a few key employees and then pull from the local labor force. This behavior is the type that should be encouraged and followed by any contractor, however in Maine we think somehow this to be different. Meanwhile out of state contractors build our new hospitals, colleges, judicial centers and brewery's using an out of state workforce and that is just in the Portland, Maine Area.

I am deeply honored to show my support of Senate President Troy Jackson's bill today as he fights everyday for the working men and women of the State. Troy is doing the best he can to well represent not only his constituents in the County but all Mainers. For this I will always be eternally grateful. It is with my sincerest hopes that Troy doesn't have to go the road alone and this committee will stand beside him ushering this bill on to the legislature for their approval.

Grant Provost
Brunswick

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