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TO: Senator Baldacci, Chair
Representative Matlack, Chair
Joint Standing Committee on State and Local Government
FROM: Becky Smith, Director of Government and Community Relations
RE: L.D. 1411, An Act to Establish the Maine Buy American and Build Maine Act
DATE: May 5, 2021

This letter addresses *L.D. 1411, An Act to Establish the Maine Buy American and Build Maine Act*.

MCCS appreciates the interests and concerns underlying the intention of this bill. As a leader of workforce development throughout the state, we understand the importance of economic development and interstate economic opportunity. Indeed, our long-term goal at MCCS is to use educational opportunity to steadily and continually provide more Maine residents with higher-skilled and therefore higher-paying jobs throughout our state.

We share the concerns on this bill as expressed by the Department of Administrative and Financial Services. Despite good intentions, political definitions like those in this bill rarely fit the realities of the supply-chain market. In-state and out of state limits, and in-country and out-of-country limits often are not as a practical matter capable of being effective. For example, Maine based companies frequently utilize out-of-state contractors, and companies based in other states hire all Maine workers and sub-contractors.

We are also concerned about the impact of this bill on our budget. It is well studied and understood that smaller markets create higher prices, and right now MCCS cannot afford these potential cost increases. Our resources are focused on addressing the skills gap that has become more profound as we enter the post-pandemic era. Any legislation that causes a structural increase in costs, comes at the expense of developing the workforce Maine needs to succeed in the post-pandemic economy.

For the reasons set forth above, MCCS therefore respectfully requests that this Committee report this bill Ought Not to Pass.

Thank you for the courtesy of your consideration.