

Matthew Morries  
MaineDOT  
LD 1854

Hello all,

My name is Matthew Morries, I am work at the MaineDOT as a Transportation Worker I out of the North Berwick camp. I have worked for the MaineDOT for nearly 2.5 years. I was looking forward to attending today to testify in person, but I am being forced to work my days off due to staffing shortages and being unable to complete work on our regularly scheduled days.

I have been at the N.Berwick camp since March of 2022(previously working at another location), and since then I have personally witnessed 4 new hires (two of them have stayed thus far,) and a total of 7 people leave(3 within the last month), bringing our current staff level to 7 out of 14 positions filled. Out of the 7 that left in this time frame, 2 work for the Maine Turnpike Authority, one works for a local parks and rec dept, and one works for Berwick town hall. All effectively doing the same job tasks but received an increase in pay.

This staffing shortage was a struggle last winter, it is a struggle now, as we no longer have enough people to split into 2 crews to complete twice the tasks, making our efficiency drop significantly. Next winter will be extremely difficult with the number of people we have now. And its not looking up anytime soon...

The writing is on the wall. People are not coming to work for the MaineDOT because of the pay gap. Its being proven currently that no one remotely qualified for the job is coming to work for the state for \$19.81 an hour because any other Public Works related job in the area pays several dollars more an hour. Most young people have little to no interest in working for the state because it doesn't pay what is needed to survive in todays economy as a young adult. That leaves you with a significantly smaller group of people who have already established their life and can afford to take the pay cut of coming to work for the state.

I am 24 years old, hoping to one day be able to buy a house in today's real estate market, get married, and start a life with my significant other. Those goals keep seeming less and less obtainable the more time goes on, due to my wages not being remotely close to following inflation, and it leads me to question whether I should leave the state and make more money elsewhere. Other people in my situation aren't even asking themselves that question however, they're just working elsewhere.

If you want to watch these problems resolve themselves in short time, then the pay gap needs to be resolved. The rest will work itself out. Please support LD1854.

Thank you for you time.

Respectfully~  
M.Morries