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Maine AFL-CIO, Maine Labor Climate Council Applaud Passage of Landmark Bill to Improve Quality of Renewable Energy Jobs

LD 1969, the Maine Climate Jobs bill, now heads to Governor Mills' desk where it is expected to become law

The Maine AFL-CIO and the [Maine Labor Climate Council](#) applaud Tuesday's final enactment [through the Maine Senate](#) and the Maine House of the most substantive public policy advancement to improve the quality of renewable energy jobs in Maine history. [LD 1969, sponsored by Rep. Scott Cuddy](#), would create good quality clean energy jobs and advance equity in the renewable energy sector.

Maine is the most oil dependent state in the country. "Mainers are currently feeling the squeeze of rising energy costs from being dependent on global oil and natural gas markets. It is long past time to develop Maine's energy independence and build our clean energy future. This bill ensures that we build that clean energy economy with good jobs and career opportunities for all Maine workers," said **Matt Schlobohm, Executive Director of the Maine AFL-CIO**.

"This is a big deal for the Maine workers and the environment," said **Cynthia Phinney, President of the Maine AFL-CIO**. "As we move toward a clean energy economy to avert climate instability, it is crucial that we create high quality jobs with living wages, decent benefits, strong labor and workplace safety protections and workers' rights. LD 1969 will help put Maine on the path of environmental sustainability and a better life for future generations of Maine workers by ensuring our energy policies are rooted in both environmental and economic justice."

"This bill will improve workplace standards and opportunities for *all* workers in our fast-growing renewable energy economy," said **Francis Eanes, Executive Director of the Maine Labor Climate Council**. "LD 1969 puts working people first, and shows us that we don't have to choose between meeting our state's ambitious climate goals and reversing 50 years of wage stagnation and rising inequality."

LD 1969 requires contractors on large renewable energy projects (solar, wind, tidal, geothermal, hydro, etc) to pay prevailing wages, which ensure that workers are paid

decent wages and benefits that are customary for each occupation in an industry. The measure also helps working class Mainers access clean energy careers by building out a system for developing and utilizing pre-apprenticeship programs, which prepare workers for direct entry into registered apprenticeship programs and advance equity.

Finally, the measure incentivizes the use of Projects Labor Agreements and employee ownership on renewable energy construction projects. The bill directs the Maine Public Utilities Commission to consider these factors when procuring energy under Maine's Renewable Portfolio Standard. Project labor agreements — a pre-hire negotiated agreement laying out terms and conditions on a project — ensure that projects are completed on time and under budget using a ready supply of skilled labor paid living wages with benefits. PLAs require strong labor standards regarding wages, hours, working conditions and dispute resolution methods.

LD 1969 passed the Maine House 81 - 59 on a party line vote on April 13. It passed the Senate 21-13 on a party line vote on Tuesday. The bill now heads to the Governor's desk. The Governor's office was involved in negotiating the final amendment to the bill with the sponsor and stakeholders. LD 1969 is expected to become law.

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