

TESTIMONY OF BRUCE HODSDON, PRESIDENT,  
MAINE STATE EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION, SEIU  
LOCAL 1989 IN SUPPORT OF  
L.D. 1353 "AN ACT REGARDING SALARY  
INFORMATION FOR PUBLIC EMPLOYEES."

APRIL 30, 2009,

Senator Bliss, Representative Priest and members of the Judiciary  
Committee,

My name is Bruce Hodsdon, and I am the president of the Maine  
State Employees Association, SEIU Local 1989, a state-wide labor  
organization representing over 15,000 hard working, dedicated,  
taxpaying public employees and retirees, including most of the  
employees of the State of Maine. Today I am speaking in favor of  
L.D. 1353

I am speaking in favor of this bill because it addresses the issue of  
privacy and decency for public employees and retirees in the State  
of Maine. We believe that the publishing of the names of front line  
employees and retirees serves no real purpose other than to subject  
these individuals to harassment. I say this because we have heard  
reports from our members that they have been confronted in

grocery stores and on the streets of their home towns and being called all kinds of nasty and degrading names. This is particularly disturbing to me as I have spent my entire life here in Maine and this is not the way I was raised to believe Maine people act. The dedicated public employees who serve the citizens of Maine want to be able to go to work, do their jobs and be able to live their lives without worrying about being accosted and harassed as they go about their daily lives.

We understand and agree with the public's right to know how their tax dollars are being spent and we agree that government needs to be transparent. But we also feel that in this electronically invasive world we live in, all citizens should have some reasonable right to privacy. We believe that this bill strikes the proper balance between those two competing interests. Taxpayers can see where their hard earned dollars are being spent by looking at the funded positions and the salaries paid to them and employees can have

Their privacy protected because their names would not be attached to those positions.

On behalf of the members and retirees of MSEA-SEIU Local 1989

I urge you support L.D. 1353.