



Maine Women's Lobby

THE VOICE OF MAINE WOMEN

MEDIA STATEMENT

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Put Focus Where It's Needed –

Adults need jobs. Teens need success in school to make a good living down the road.

Statement of Laura Harper

Director of Public Policy, Maine Women's Lobby

“Last night the Maine House passed an amended version of L.D. 516, a roll back on teen work hour protections. The bill increases the hours teens can work on a school day to 6; to 24 hours during a school week; and limits them to working until 10:15 p.m. on a school night. This is a significant improvement over the initial bill that, as written, would have removed **all** hourly protections for teen workers.

“A further amendment to minimize the harmful impact of this bill failed by a vote of 75 to 70.

“We're pleased that majorities in the House and Senate recognized that keeping kids working until 11:00 p.m. on a school night puts their health and safety at risk, and we commend bipartisan efforts to find a workable compromise.

“Nonetheless, this law will take Maine in the wrong direction. At a time when Maine desperately needs to be creating jobs and a skilled workforce, we are undermining student success. Volumes of research demonstrate that once teens work over 20 hours a week, drop-out rates and even substance abuse rates increase. Further, studies show that the more hours teens work the more likely it is that their grades will decline.

“Adults need jobs. Teens need success in school to make a good living down the road. We urge lawmakers to put focus where it's needed—creating jobs, increasing access to education, and sparking economic growth that will benefit kids, families, and our state.”

The Maine Women's Lobby is a nonpartisan, nonprofit, membership organization working since 1978 to increase opportunities for women and girls through advocacy and legislative action.

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