

**TESTIMONY OF GINETTE RIVARD,  
MSEA-SEIU LOCAL 1989**

**BEFORE THE JOINT STANDING  
COMMITTEE ON STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT  
APRIL 16, 2015 10:00 AM COB ROOM 214**

**IN SUPPORT OF LD 1166  
AN ACT TO PROTECT TAXPAYERS  
BY REGULATING PERSONAL SERVICES CONTRACTS**

Senator Whitemore, Representative Martin, members of the State and Local Government Committee: My name is Ginette Rivard, president of the Maine State Employees Association, Local 1989 of the Service Employees International Union. MSEA-SEIU Local 1989 is a labor union representing over 13,000 public sector and publicly funded workers statewide. We speak in support of LD 1166.

As you know, the overwhelming majority of the members of my union are public servants as we represent workers in all three branches of Maine State Government, the Maine Community College System, the Maine Maritime Academy, the Maine Turnpike Authority, the City of Lewiston, Lewiston City Schools, York County Government, and the Maine Public Employees Retirement System, among other public employers.

Our members understand and embrace the fact that they do their jobs with the highest level of accountability and transparency to Maine people. At all hours of every day, our members perform vital public services so everyone else in Maine can go about their daily lives. And if there ever is a problem with the work our members do, the people of Maine know they can and will hold us accountable. All it takes is a phone call to a regional office of the Maine DOT, Maine DHHS, the Governor's office, or directly to YOU, for Maine citizens who have an issue, problem, question or concern to speak directly with someone about the work our members do.

Yet a substantial amount of work – hundreds of millions of dollars worth of work – is being done every year with taxpayer dollars without the same high level of transparency and accountability to the citizens of Maine. This is because every year, the State of Maine spends hundreds of millions of taxpayer dollars on contracted services. These services, typically rendered after a competitive bidding process, are then performed by the chosen contractors at the rates of pay and terms specified in the given contract. The sheer volume of contracts and amount of money is so high it could be extremely difficult for average Mainers at any given time to easily find out what work is being contracted out, who was chosen to do the work, the terms of the contract, the rate of pay, whether the work was completed to contract specifications, and whether the state actually got its money's worth from the contract.

The LePage administration has recognized the need for greater transparency and accountability in state-contracted services by creating the "Maine Open Checkbook" website at [opencheckbook.maine.gov](http://opencheckbook.maine.gov). This website is evolving. According to its "About" page, plans are afoot to add additional information such as charts and graphs and reports to the website in an effort to increase the level of transparency and accountability in Maine State Government personal service contracts.

LD 1166 would strengthen the transparency and accountability in state contracts by making cost-savings information provided by winners of competitively bid contracts available online for anyone to see. LD 1166 specifically would require a new contractor to provide, where applicable, the projected savings of the contract over the State's cost of providing the same service, and also include the amount of savings compared to the previous contractor.

LD 1166 would further require contractors whose contracts are renewed or extended for the first time to include details of the expiring contract's cost savings and details on continued cost savings at or below costs in the current contract adjusted for inflation. Under LD 1166, Maine people would have the information they need not just to find out what contractor is being paid to do and at what price, but whether the State of Maine is saving or losing money compared to the cost of keeping that work within the State of Maine's workforce, so please join me in supporting LD 1166.

Thank you and I would be glad to answer any questions.