

Ashley Richards

Governor, Senator, and member of the audience. For the past 33 years, I've had the privilege of employing several hundred Mainers. With their help we have remodeled well over a thousand homes in Maine, built over a hundred new homes, and in the last seven years weatherized and insulated over a thousand homes and businesses in Maine. I am here today representing not only my industry, but also the 20 people who rely on me every week for a paycheck. I have two topics to quickly cover, which I believe have a direct impact on job creation, energy efficiency, and the environment. First, Steve already mentioned this, but with the creation of a new uniform building and energy code, we have moved this state from the 19th century into the 21st century. We stand alongside forty other states who have adopted similar codes. In spite of this, there is a move afoot to abolish and or delay the implementation of these codes. A uniform code makes sense, makes building and development in Maine predictable, reduces development costs and provides opportunity for business growth. The codes significantly reduce energy costs for Maine people and can inspire employees to increase energy education and training at a community college or elsewhere. Along with the mainstream building industry, I ask for your support moving forward with the implementation of the building and energy codes.

Second, Efficiency Maine, including the home savings and energy program, is a government program that really works, because it is focused on results. For every one dollar of tax payer investment, \$2.23 was actually returned to the economy in the form of wages paid and materials purchased. Over 1600 homes were weatherized in 6 months, which represents over \$12 million reinvested in the Maine economy. With adequate funding, we can double that return annually, and given the condition of existing homes in Maine, we have at least 16 years of work ahead of us. I ask for your support in working with us to create a sustainable mechanism for funding this program.

And finally, Governor, I'll be the first to admit that I am not a native Mainer. But when I travel across this country representing the home builders and remodelers of Maine, and I'm introduced, I'm proud to be introduced as a Mainiac.

Thank you.

Remarks at "Maine People and the Environment" roundtable with Governor LePage
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