

## **Business Leaders Unveil Criteria for Evaluating LD 1 Proposals Lawmakers Urged to Use Five Common Sense Guidelines to Sort through Reforms February 14, 2011**

### **Heather Blease – Thayer Corporation**

I am pleased to be here today to join in the effort to urge lawmakers to use a principle-based approach to regulatory reform.

I currently serve as Director of Marketing and Sales for the Thayer Corporation, based in Auburn. Thayer provides mechanical engineering services, which traditionally includes heating, ventilation, refrigeration, and air conditioning. But our company has also branched out into providing alternative fuel systems including biomass systems, geothermal solutions, solar installations, and some involvement in wind projects.

My perspective comes from working for a company involved in energy efficiency and alternative energy projects that are helping reduce energy costs, reduce our dependence on fossil fuels, reduce carbon emissions, and contribute to increased energy security.

One of the great things about our work is that it cannot be outsourced. Maine has old and inefficient buildings, and there is a huge need to retrofit these buildings so that they waste less energy and less of the precious dollars of the owners of those buildings. And the jobs associated with energy efficiency are good jobs, and the field could greatly expand if energy prices continue to increase.

My perspective on Maine's economy and job creation also comes from having been the founder of ENVISIONeT. I led the company from start-up to an industry leader of technical support and service for Internet providers and information technology companies. We started in 1995 in Brunswick with four employees, and grew over the course of five years to nearly 1,000 employees in three locations. But then one of our top clients shifted their business overseas, which led to the ultimate demise of my company and the loss of great jobs for many Mainers.

I have been following the regulatory reform discussion over the past several months and believe there are important process improvements that can be made, and should be made, to improve the predictability and effectiveness of doing business in Maine. But I urge the Legislature to be cautious in its tinkering of Maine's laws, and to be absolutely sure that any proposals that are enacted provide a clear benefit to Maine people and Maine businesses, and not be driven by the needs of companies that do not employ Maine workers. Some of the proposals in the Governor's package appear to be for interested parties not located in Maine.

I also believe that much of the improvement that is being sought can be achieved without legislative action. I am confident that increased sense of partnership between regulators and businesses can go a long way to improving the business climate in Maine, and that's not something that can be legislated.

As one who has hired hundreds of employees over the years, I know that Maine has a special environment that is treasured by the people who work here. Spending time in our

outdoors is like a second paycheck. And although we must make sure that everyone has a that first paycheck, I am concerned that regulatory reform done wrong could take away one of the reasons why people love to live and work in Maine. We should avoid that at all costs. I believe the guiding principles announced today can help the Legislature do just that.