

More facts, less spin

The op-ed titled, "Not-so-gloomy Maine" (BDN, June 24), by Rep. Charles Fisher of Brewer, weakly sought to paint the Maine Economic Research Institute (MERI) as the "propaganda arm of the Maine Republican Party," a completely wrong assertion most often made by politicians trying to distort facts and avoid economic reality.

The fact is some politicians don't like accountability, nor do they like any negative facts to which they can be directly linked. MERI is a politically diverse organization with Democrats, Republicans, Independents and those with other political affiliations, on its board of directors and its Advisory Committee. MERI is not about the politics of politics as some would like to suggest. MERI is about a better Maine economy.

Rep. Fisher goes on to address an earlier BDN op-ed that used some data from MERI's periodic Senior Management Survey (SMS). The representative from Brewer tries to mislead readers by saying that MERI "orchestrated" the study to suggest manipulation and he states the study was "paid for by political organizations." Neither

misguided accusation is true.

The fact is MERI contracts periodically for studies of Maine business leaders to better understand what is vital to their success and their ability to create jobs. MERI's 2005 SMS marked the third similar study contracted with a nationally renowned company, Market Research Insights. The study is scientific, conducted with statistical rigor, and reflects reliable results. With more than two-thirds of the participants representing small, often family-owned, employers, this study is representative of all Maine employers.

Anyone can read the full report on www.fixmaine.com and reach their conclusions.

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