

To: Appropriations Committee

Fr: Frank Strout

Re: LD 1480 – An Act to Protect Union Wharf and Sustain Maine’s Maritime Industries

Dear Senator Rotundo, Representative Sachs, and Members of the Appropriations Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today in support of LD 1480 An Act to Protect Union Wharf and Sustain Maine’s Marine Industries

My Name is Frank Strout, I’m a lobsterman from Cape Elizabeth I’ve berth my boat and worked off Union Wharf for over 40 years. I store my gear, buy bait, sell my catch and use many of the marine related business on the wharf.

I formally served on the Zone F and Lobster Advisory Councils.

I currently serve on the Land for Maine Future Working Waterfront Review Committee since its inception in 2005. This program has protected many piers, wharfs, docks and access along the coast. Great Program that works very well for smaller projects. Funding, however, is very limited for properties like Union Wharf with its diversity of Marine related businesses.

I have served for 30 + years on the Cape Elizabeth Land Trust Board working to protect farmland so I know a little bit about conservation easements.

Union Wharf is at the heart of Portland’s Working waterfront and needs to be protected. Zoning and deed restrictions will not assure the future of the wharf for Commercial fishing and other marine related businesses.

These fund with be used to permanently protect Union Wharf by recording a declaration of covenants and restrictions encumbering Union Wharf. These restrictions will be enforced to ensure the wharf will permanently remain part of the Working Waterfront.

Union Wharf not only serves the fisherman of Portland but throughout the state. As I have traveled the coast from Harpswell, Spruce Head, Tenant’s Harbor, Port Clyde and others I was asked when Union Wharf was listed for sale what the future would be. The pressures of development of non-marine activity in Portland are rapid with condominiums selling for over 1 million dollars on the non-seaward side of commercial street.

Once it was announced that The Gulf of Maine Research Institute was negotiating and purchasing Union Wharf there was huge support from the entire fishing community and the public.

I believe that your support and passage of LD 1480 will not only benefit the working waterfront in Portland, throughout the state but will serve as a model to protect future access.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to speak in support of LD 1480.

I would welcome any questions