



Maine County Commissioners Association

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LD 212, An Act to Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue to Upgrade Municipal Culverts at Stream Crossings

April 27, 2023

Senator Rotundo, Representative Sachs, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs, my name is Stephen Gorden and in addition to serving as a member of the board of commissioners for Cumberland County, I am writing today in my role as chair of the legislative policy committee of the Maine County Commissioners Association. We appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony to the Committee in qualified support of LD 212, with one recommended amendment discussed below.

About MCCA. Briefly, the Maine County Commissioners Association was established in 1890 to assist Maine's county government in providing vital services to Maine citizens in a responsive, efficient, and credible manner. The Association is based in Augusta, represents all of Maine's 16 counties, and is governed by a board with representation from each participating county.

Discussion. LD 212 would provide \$50 million for a competitive grant program that matches local funding for the upgrade of municipal culverts at stream crossings to enhance and restore rivers, various wildlife habitats, and allow communities to better prepare for extreme weather, including storms and floods.

As drafted, the proceeds from this bond issue would be available for municipalities, but the bill leaves out the unorganized territories that are managed by Maine's counties. These communities are home to many Maine people and also have local needs with regard to culverts.

If the Legislature does decide to move forward with this bill, we would ask that it be amended to allow resources to go to the unorganized territories as well.

Conclusion. We appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony on this bill, and if you have questions or need additional information, please do not hesitate to let us know.

Respectfully submitted,

Stephen Gorden
Chair, Legislative Policy Committee

cc: Commissioner Richard Dutremble, President, MCCA
James I. Cohen, Verrill Dana, LLP, MCCA Legislative Counsel