



**Alison Sucy, Chief Operating Officer and Director of Government Affairs,
on Behalf of the Maine Tourism Association**

**In Opposition to
*LD 1845, An Act to Regulate Outdoor Lighting***

May 8, 2023

Senator Brenner, Representative Gramlich, and Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Environment and Natural Resources:

My name is Alison Sucy and I am the Chief Operating Officer and Director of Government Affairs for the Maine Tourism Association. The Maine Tourism Association, a non-profit, is the state's largest tourism organization supporting members in every type of tourism business such as lodging, restaurants, camps, campgrounds, retail, guides, tour operators, amusements, and historical and cultural attractions. We've been promoting Maine and our 1500 members for over 100 years. I present this testimony in opposition to LD 1845.

This proposal would affect nearly every tourism business, and affect them in different ways. First, the restrictions in this bill will pose safety concerns. Parking lot and walkway lighting are not in the exclusions. Hotels, motels, and other lodging facilities have parking lots and entrances to customer rooms that require strong lighting for safety and security. Larger retail establishments similarly have large parking lots, as do entertainment, amusement, recreation such as ski areas, and conference venues. Lighting serves as a deterrent to theft and other crimes, protecting property and, more importantly, people (customers and employees) at these businesses.

Second, lighting for nighttime activities and concerts should be treated differently than parking lot lighting, signage, or other uses. Municipalities regulate lighting and take these events and businesses into consideration; and the municipalities should be allowed to continue to make the best decisions for their residents and businesses at the local level. Therefore, one statewide standard for all as proposed in this bill will make little sense.

Third, we are concerned about the costs to our small businesses whether it is from retrofitting lighting with "shields" that meet the definition in the bill—which may not even be possible, purchasing all new bulbs, or complete replacement of lighting fixtures or lighted signs to comply. These will be expensive propositions; and very difficult to comply with by January 2024.

Finally, we believe a better option would be educational campaigns through the Department of Environmental Protection to provide information and any available grants to update lighting with longer-lasting, cost-effective, and more environmentally friendly alternatives in bulbs and fixtures.

Thank you for your time and consideration of our testimony.

The Maine Tourism Association is the state's largest advocate for all tourism-related businesses. Incorporated in 1922, MTA members include lodging, restaurants, camps, campgrounds, retail, outdoor recreation, guides, tour operators, transportation, amusements, and cultural and historical attractions. MTA also operates on behalf of the state seven State Visitor Information Centers from Kittery to Calais, and annually produces the state's official travel planner, Maine Invites You (since 1933).