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TESTIMONY BEFORE THE JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON STATE AND
LOCAL GOVERNMENT
IN SUPPORT OF LD 1934

Resolve, to Improve the Coordination and Delivery of Planning Grants and Technical Assistance to Communities in Maine

May 25, 2023

Senator Nangle, Representative Stover, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on State and Local Government, my name is Judy East, and I am the Director of the Bureau of Resource Information and Land Use Planning (BRILUP) in the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry (DACF). I am testifying on behalf of DACF in support of LD 1934, *Resolve, to Improve the Coordination and Delivery of Planning Grants and Technical Assistance to Communities in Maine*.

This bill directs the Governor's Office of Policy Innovation and the Future (GOPIF) to review opportunities and structural changes in the organization of State Government and make recommendations to improve the coordination and implementation of planning grants and technical assistance programs for Maine communities and regional planning and development organizations. Broad consultation is called for, and a report is due to this committee and the Appropriations and Financial Affairs Committee by December 6, 2023.

BRILUP is uniquely positioned to help with this bill's aims because we provide technical assistance and land use planning expertise to a broad cohort of entities relevant to the scope of LD 1934. We administer the Coastal Community Grant (CCG) Program that assists municipalities and regional organizations to plan for climate resilience, among other goals. BRILUP also contracts annually with regional planning organizations to provide technical assistance to municipalities. BRILUP staff assist in grant program development and review to other agencies, including GOPIF, the Department of Marine Resources, and the Department of Economic and Community Development, with the Community Resilience Partnership, Shore and Harbor grant program, and the Housing Opportunity Program, respectively. We are ready to participate in this initiative and recommend robust participation from the regional planning organizations that have extensive knowledge of the needs of municipalities.

Additional programs within BRILUP, the Maine Forest Service, and the Bureau of Agriculture, Food, and Rural Resources also provide grants and technical assistance to municipalities. Should this bill pass, all affected programs will be interested and ready to participate in this discussion.

Thank you for your time. I would happily answer any questions at the work session.

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