

Fortin Dairy Consulting LLC
4 North Circle Dr
Fairfield, ME 04937

2/6/2024

RE: LD 2188

Dear Member of the Ag Committee,

I am writing in support of LD 2188 which will increase the tier funding amounts on the support paid to the dairy farmers in the state of Maine. I am the 3rd generation of my family which have been involved in the dairy industry in the state of Maine. My grandfather and father were directly involved in dairy production as dairy farmers, and I have spent over 26 years in the dairy industry as a dairy production consultant, formerly as a company representative and currently as an independent consultant working both in and outside of the state of Maine.

I am in support of LD 2188 because this is one of the few opportunities the dairy farmers in the state of Maine to balance the higher costs they face by dairy farming in the state of Maine. Maine producers pay a premium for their inputs due to higher transportation costs on the goods they use in the production of dairy products. From the nutritional supplements they feed their animals, to the equipment and parts they buy, to the soil amendments and seed they use to produce forage to feed their animals, not to mention added labor costs with state imposed minimum wage changes. The farm owners have not seen a rise in product prices to offset these costs. My clients outside of the state of Maine due to lower transportation costs see input costs anywhere from 10-25% lower than my producers in Maine. As a group the farmers have run cost of production studies, and the financial increase in the tier stabilization program is an accurate representation as to what the dairy producers in the state of Maine are facing for cost of production.

Considering this I hope you will support LD 2188 so that we can keep the dairy industry alive here in Maine and help maintain the open space and rural landscapes that help make Maine feel like home.

Sincerely,

Allan J. Fortin