



# Maine Lobstering Union

## Local 207



150 Bar Harbor Rd, Trenton, ME 04605

Dear Sen. Curry, Rep. Roberts, and all members of the Joint Standing Committee on Innovations, Development, Economic Advancement, and Business.

I am writing on behalf of the Maine Lobstering Union, Lobster 207, and our coastal communities. Maine's fishing industry is a powerful economic driver for the State of Maine, it spans generations of families and provides essential revenue for the many municipalities on the coast.

We are all happy to support LD 2191 An Act to Provide Relief to Small Businesses Affected by Severe Weather-related Events.

We need this funding so much! Towns up and down the coast are reeling from the storm's impacts from complete demolition, buildings and docks floating off, to major erosion to where the structures were, parking, equipment that was flooded like fuel pumps, generators, and infrastructure to these buildings. Many of these docks are privately owned companies, or cooperatives owned by the individual fishermen, and most do not have insurance to cover flooding. All of the claims submitted to insurance companies have been denied as "an act of god". What does this mean if our working waterfront can't be built back? Fishermen use these docks year-round, and the majority must use them in the spring as fishermen need access to the docks to move the gear they use to fish from the shore to the ocean. The few public docks available cannot handle the number of fishermen Maine has, if they even allow commercial activities on them. With the lack of funding currently available, these commercial docks will be required to take out loans backed by the equity these companies have or use the bank-approved credit lines they have for repairs. What does this mean? When it

comes time to purchase lobster and other species in the spring, they will not have the funding necessary to do so. The price fishermen get at the dock for their catch will be depressed in value because commercial facilities only have so much of a margin to operate a successful perishable business. Our state and our municipalities can't afford the loss of revenue from a year lost to fishing.

We need the ability to build back as soon as possible. The companies available to do this work should be asked to put the commercial facilities on the priority list. Current wait times exceed 18 months without a priority designation.

We thank Senator Hickman for bringing this very important bill forward, we also ask that we utilize the Transportation Committee as they can get these funds out to those in need quickly.

We work with small businesses every day and understand Maine's need for these funds. We hope you will support this vital bill and vote, ought to pass.

Thank you,

Virginia Olsen  
District 4, IAMAW  
Maine Lobstering Union

Virginia Olsen  
Maine Lobstering Union-Local Lodge 207  
LD 2191  
Please support LD 2191 and vote ought to pass