

Dear Sen. Rotundo, Rep. Sachs, and distinguished members of the Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs:

I am writing to express my support for **LD 2225**, titled "An Act to Provide Funding to Rebuild Infrastructure Affected by Extreme Inland and Coastal Weather Events." This crucial legislation aims to allocate \$50,000,000 from the Maine Budget Stabilization Fund to the Department of Transportation's Infrastructure Adaptation Fund.

On January 10<sup>th</sup>, 2024, my family's wharf was destroyed by the unprecedented storm surge experienced along Maine's coast. My grandfather built our wharf over 60 years ago, and at the age of 91 he watched as the ocean wiped it all away. A 4,000 square foot wharf that has supported dozens of commercial fishing family members and sternmen over the past 6 decades, gone in the blink of an eye. At the time, my father and partner were both running their lobster businesses from that wharf. All of their traps, rope, buoys, tanks, crates, and other gear were on the wharf when it went down. To say that it was a devastating blow doesn't even come close to expressing the loss and anguish we felt that day, and every day since.

Maine's fishing families need help. Our working waterfronts need help. We needed help before these storms, and I'm afraid now we are poised to lose so much of our culture and identity, with detrimental impacts to fishing livelihoods, families, and coastal communities. Without support to rebuild, properties will be sold, and families will be displaced from the coast. Gentrification, which has increasingly become a problem in Maine, will accelerate and the coast of Maine will forever be altered.

Your support of LD 2225 is instrumental in aiding Maine's fishermen and harvesters, fishing families, and coastal communities as we attempt to rebuild and prepare for a future with higher sea levels and more intense storms.

I urge you to approve LD 2225 and help fishing families and the infrastructure we rely on.

Thank you for your time.

Marissa McMahan, PhD  
Commercial lobster license holder (Zone E)  
Fisheries Scientist  
Resident of Georgetown