

March 5, 2024

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

This letter is being written in support for **LD2225**, “An Act to Provide Funding to Rebuild Infrastructure Affected by Extreme Inland and Coastal Weather Events.” The allocation of \$50,000,000 from the Maine Budget Stabilization Fund to the Department of Transportation’s Infrastructure Adaptation Fund is crucial to the rebuilding of Maine’s coastal communities, and especially to Maine’s commercial fishermen after the destruction caused by the January 10, 2024 storm.

I am a commercial fisherman and my family has fished along the Maine coast for more than five generations. Our family wharf that my father built 60 years ago was destroyed by the January 10th storm. All of my lobster traps and gear including rope, buoys, crates, and tanks were stored on that wharf when it collapsed due to the severity of that storm. Despite the fact that we continually repaired and raised the height of our 4,000 square foot wharf through the years, the structure could not withstand the fury of this devastating storm.

While the financial loss to our family is huge, the emotional affects of seeing our family’s way of life destroyed in a matter of minutes has been equally as difficult to deal with. The cost to rebuild our wharf, even at a fraction of its current size, would be astronomical for my family. I have been a commercial fisherman all of my life and have witnessed many threats to the Maine commercial fishing industry, but none so devastating as the storms that now plague the Maine coast with more frequency every year.

I urge you to support **LD2225** to help us rebuild Maine’s coastal communities, aide Maine’s commercial fishermen and their families, and preserve this way of life for future generations.

James McMahan, Jr.
Commercial Fisherman (Zone E)
Resident of Georgetown