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Follow-up Testimony of the Maine Municipal Association (MMA)

In Support of

*LD 138, An Act to Exempt Airports from Certain State
Endangered and Threatened Speis Habitat Protections*

January 31, 2025

Senator Tepler, Representative Doudera and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Environment and Natural Resources, my name is Amanda Campbell, and I am submitting follow-up testimony for LD 138 on behalf of the Maine Municipal Association's 70-member Legislative Policy Committee (LPC) who is tasked with debating and voting on positions for bills with a municipal impact.

The LPC's discussion of this bill mirrored much of the testimony heard by the committee from municipal airport officials. While the committee recognizes the positions of both the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife and the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), and appreciates their collaboration for approvals of airport development, the committee ultimately voted to support this bill.

Prioritization of human safety, the stark contrast between DEP and the Federal Aviation Administration rules for wildlife and habitat, and the potential for decreased economic development in communities that host airports are key points of importance to municipal officials. The bill's targeted changes can address all three points.

In addition, the LPC questioned the broad definition of "airport" and municipal officials would ask the committee to consider clarifying if this proposed legislation would apply to only land-based aircraft activity.

Thank you for your patience and consideration of the municipal perspective. Please feel free to contact me or any member of the MMA Advocacy team with any questions relating to municipal operations.