

**Jay McCreight  
Harpwell, Maine  
February 3, 2025**

In Support of LD 201, Part E

Senator Rotundo, Representative Gattine, Esteemed Members of the Appropriations and Financial Affairs Committee, I am Jay McCreight of Harpswell submitting my testimony in support of Part E of LD 210:

*An Act Making Unified Appropriations and Allocations From the General Fund and Other Funds for the Expenditures of State Government and Changing Certain Provisions of the Law Necessary to Proper Operations of State Government for the Fiscal Years Ending June 20, 2025, June 30, 2026 and June 20, 2027.*

I was honored to serve in the Maine House representing Harpswell, West Bath and northeast Brunswick for 4 terms, 2015-2022. During my tenure, I worked to address responsible tobacco policy, including a tax increase and equalization of taxes on all tobacco products. I submit my testimony today in strongest support of Part E of LD 210 because it does both.

The critical reasons for enacting this tobacco tax proposal are well-addressed by LD 210, Part E, as it proposes sound policy that significantly benefits the health of Mainers. Specifically, increasing taxes on tobacco products will help the State in tax revenue and importantly it has the proven effect of discouraging people, particularly youth, from starting to use these addicting substances while also motivating current tobacco consumers to quit.

We know that certain populations are specifically targeted by the tobacco industry. And we know the harm this addiction causes - among them are heart disease, cancer, diabetes - and we know the subsequent health care costs and loss of workforce productivity. We also know that youth are particularly susceptible to addictive substances and that their brain development is adversely impacted by early use.

The tobacco industry, and those who sell this deadly product, will likely use the same tactics they always do to try to kill this proposal — exaggerations and scare tactics. I urge you to consider that these tactics are proof that this industry knows that tobacco taxes work and that they pose a serious threat to their ability to profit from sales of their harmful and addictive products.

As you give due consideration to LD 210, Part E, please look to the evidence that clearly shows the harm tobacco products cause and the effectiveness of higher taxes in discouraging people from starting in the first place and in motivating people who are already using to quit. I urge you ignore the faulty arguments the tobacco industry will again try to sell you.

Thank you for your attention to a proposal so important to all of us.

Jay McCreight  
Harpwell, Maine