

Rafal Subernat
Veazie, ME
LD 283

Testimony in Opposition to LD 283
Submitted to the Joint Standing Committee on Taxation
February 26, 2025

Dear Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Taxation,

My name is Rafal Subernat, and I am writing to express my full opposition to LD 283. As a Mainer who relies on vacation rental properties and the tourism industry for my livelihood, I am deeply concerned about the negative impact this bill will have on Maine's economy, particularly in our vital hospitality and tourism sectors.

LD 283 seeks to redirect 1% of meals and lodging sales tax revenue to municipalities. While this may seem like a way to support local communities, in reality, it functions as a local sales tax imposed without direct input from the businesses and residents it will affect. This sets a dangerous precedent for future tax increases without proper community engagement.

More critically, this bill threatens Maine's ability to market itself as a premier destination for visitors. Tourism is the backbone of our economy, and cutting into critical marketing funds will only weaken our ability to attract visitors. We are already seeing troubling trends—Maine's tourism dropped 9% in the summer of 2024. Now is not the time to undercut our promotional efforts.

Consider the facts:

- In 2023 alone, tourists spent \$9 billion in Maine, driving a \$16 billion economic impact. The strength of our tourism marketing directly fuels this success.
- Redirecting these funds risks diminishing Maine's visibility in an increasingly competitive tourism market, affecting not only vacation rental owners like myself but also local restaurants, shops, and countless small businesses that depend on visitor spending.
- Without direct community input, this tax shift would create an unfair burden on businesses and residents, potentially paving the way for future tax increases without accountability.

Maine's economy is intricately tied to tourism, and any policy that weakens our ability to attract visitors jeopardizes the livelihoods of thousands of hardworking Mainers. I urge you to reject LD 283 and protect the integrity of our state's tourism industry.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Dr. Rafal Subernat
Maine Physician and Real Estate Business owner