

Jasmine Haines
Eastport
LD 468

Testimony of Jasmine J. Haines of Eastport before the 132st Legislature's Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

Dear members of the Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry.

My name is Jasmine Haines, I am a resident of Eastport, and I am here today as a community member who relies on farmer's markets to express my support of LD 468 – An Act to Address Food Insecurity by Helping Maine Residents Access Locally Produced Food.

As someone who grew up on a family farm and was once a SNAP beneficiary, I've seen firsthand the importance of supporting Maine's local food systems. During my time of need, the SNAP program was truly life-saving, and it gave me the security to access healthy, fresh food. That's why I believe so strongly in the power of Maine's Farmer's Markets. In 2024 alone, these markets generated over \$1.2 million in sales for Maine producers, and the programs supporting them are vital to our economy and our communities. I want to see that safety net continue for all Mainers, with the added benefit of being deeply rooted in our local food systems. It's essential for a healthier, more sustainable future for everyone in Maine.