

Penobscot Bay Watch

People who care about Maine's biggest bay

penbay.org coastwatch@gmail.com 207-691-4634

March 11, 2025

Testimony to the Environment and Natural Resources Committee
March 12, 2025 Regarding **LD 226 “An Act to Protect the Cultural Resources and Historical Heritage of Sears Island in Searsport by Extending Conservation Easement Protections”** and **LD 735 . An Act to Protect Sand Dunes on Sears Island and to Establish Criteria for Legislation Regarding Land Development**

Senator Tepler, Representative Doudera, and members of the Environment and Natural Resources Committee, my name is Ron Huber, and I run Penobscot Bay Watch

I am here today to testify in support of the conservation easement expansion in LD 226 and the sand dune protections in LD 735. These represent prudent, forward-thinking policy. Essential safeguards for what is, after all, a critical part of our functional river/bay estuary

But today I ask the committee to consider Sears Island's value through an illuminating historical parallel: **New York City's Central Park.**

In the 1850s, visionary leaders set aside over 800 acres of undeveloped land within a rapidly urbanizing Manhattan. They recognized that preserving natural space amid development wasn't an extravagance but a necessity for public well being.

Today, as Maine warms we're experiencing accelerated development throughout our bay region.

Sears Island presents Maine with a similar opportunity. At nearly 1,000 acres, this easy access natural public island, sitting at its critical juncture between the Penobscot River and Bay, can fulfill all the needs a rapidly urbanizing and suburbanizing Penobscot Bay will require.

As sprawl waves transform the bay's coasts, you have the opportunity to be remembered as visionaries who preserved this irreplaceable natural part of it. and the Penobscot Estuary it services, for all present and future Mainers. I urge you to support both bills.

Thank you for your consideration.

Ron Huber

Ron Huber

Penobscot Bay Watch

Belfast Maine

Ron Huber
Penobscot BayWatch
LD 226

Penobscot Bay Watch
People who care about Maine's biggest bay
penbay.org

March 12, 2025

Testimony to the Environment and Natural Resources Committee March 12, 2025
Regarding LD 226 "An Act to Protect the Cultural Resources and Historical Heritage
of Sears Island in Searsport by Extending Conservation Easement Protections" and
LD 735 . An Act to Protect Sand Dunes on Sears Island and to Establish Criteria for
Legislation Regarding Land Development

Senator Tepler, Representative Doudera, and members of the Environment and
Natural Resources Committee, my name is Ron Huber, and I run Penobscot Bay
Watch

I am here today to testify in support of the conservation easement expansion in LD
226 and the sand dune protections in LD 735. These represent prudent,
forward-thinking policy. Essential safeguards for what is, after all, a critical part of
our functional river/bay estuary

But today I ask the committee to consider Sears Island's value through an
illuminating historical parallel: New York City's Central Park.

In the 1850s, visionary leaders set aside over 800 acres of undeveloped land within a
rapidly urbanizing Manhattan. They recognized that preserving natural space amid
development wasn't an extravagance but a necessity for public well being. I urge you
to look up Central Park aerials on the web or on Google Earth.

Today, as Maine warms we're experiencing accelerated development throughout our
bay region.

Sears Island presents Maine with a similar opportunity. At nearly 1,000 acres, this
easy access natural public island, sitting at its critical juncture between the
Penobscot River and Bay, can fulfill all the needs a rapidly urbanizing and
suburbanizing Penobscot Bay will require

As sprawl waves transform the bay's coasts, you have the opportunity to be
remembered as visionaries who preserved this irreplaceable natural part of it. and the
Penobscot Estuary it services, for all present and future Mainers. I urge you to
support both bills.

Thank you for your consideration.
Ron Huber

Ron Huber
Penobscot Bay Watch
Belfast Maine
coastwatch@gmail.com
207-691-4634