

## **Maine Sporting Camp Association (MSCA)**

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### **Testimony in Opposition**

#### **L.D. 225**

#### **An Act to Reduce Property Taxes and Finance Public School Construction and Education Through a 3 Percent Sales Tax on Hotel and Lodging Place Rentals**

#### **TO**

**Joint Standing Committee on Taxation  
Wednesday, March 12, 2025, at 2:00 PM**

Senator Grohoski, Representative Cloutier, and members of the Taxation Committee. The Maine Sporting Camp Association (MSCA) is testifying in opposition to L.D. 225. My name is Harvey Calden, President of MSCA, and owner of Tim Pond Camps in Franklin County. Tim Pond Camps is the oldest continuously operated Sporting Camp / Lodge in America. MSCA represents commercial sporting lodges from Rangeley Lakes Region to Lubec and from Belgrade to Allagash. Maine Sporting Camps introduced tourism to Maine over a century ago.

The proposed 33% increase in lodging tax will have a chilling impact on member camps lodging revenues causing great harm to rural areas. With lodging sales already in decline statewide, and further impacted by two consecutive poor snowmobile seasons, this tax will lead to slower sales and thus hinder the goals of this proposed legislation. The numerous Maine Residents visiting our lodges will not be happy with any increase and may end their visits. Already our Maine guests complain about the 9% lodging tax, taxed electrical bills, and taxed gasoline prices intended to fund lofty Legislative goals. They also are concerned with government spending requiring these taxes. A Maine Sporting Camp summer vacation is currently very affordable for low- and middle-income families. This legislation will directly hurt those families and Maine's small rural businesses.

MSCA lodges provide a critical infrastructure and economic stimulus in Maine's rural areas through employment and investments. We are among the first responders to tourists in need of emergency assistance, be it flat tires, gasoline, or a medical emergency. Our members are not hotels, not motels, and not BnB's. Maine's commercial sporting camps should be exempt from any sales tax increase. This proposed tax increase is an added threat surfacing to speed the extinction of this heritage industry and it will drive away business.

Thank you.

Harvey Calden, President  
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*The Maine Sporting Camp Association (MSCA) was founded in 1987 by a group of camp owners to preserve the sporting camp's uniqueness in the State of Maine. By working closely with other groups and exchanging ideas and information, the members of MSCA continue the tradition of providing high quality recreational experiences to individuals and their families, a quality experience that visitors will remember long after they return home. The MSCA is a 501C (6) non-profit organization that is led by a board of directors. **Maine Sporting Camp Association** 126 Western Avenue, Box 153, Augusta, Maine 04330, [info@mainesportingcamps.com](mailto:info@mainesportingcamps.com), Phone: (207) 888-3931*