



**Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry
Supporting**

**LD 895, “An Act to Support Immersive Outdoor Education by Establishing
the Outdoor School for All Maine Students Program”**

March 13, 2025

Senator Talbot Ross, Representative Pluecker, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry: My name is Jenny Kordick, and I currently serve as Executive Director of Maine Outdoor Brands. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of LD 895, “**An Act to Support Immersive Outdoor Education by Establishing the Outdoor School for All Maine Students Program.**”

Founded in 2017, Maine Outdoor Brands (MOB) is an alliance of Maine based outdoor companies united in their desire to strengthen our state’s \$3.4 billion outdoor recreation economy. MOB works to unite, grow, and give a voice to the state’s outdoor recreation industry, supporting knowledge sharing, collaborative marketing, and commerce efforts and access to professional resources. MOB is committed to seeing Maine-based outdoor product, service, and retail brands thrive, and today has over 180 member brands that are a part of the mission. With four distinct seasons, virtually every fresh-air adventure one could want, and a highly collaborative, closely connected outdoor industry, it’s no wonder why so many outdoor brands have decided to call Maine home.

Central to our industry is the fundamental connection to nature and outdoor recreation, which is why we support the **Outdoor Schools for All Maine Students Program**. This legislation establishes a pioneering program aimed at offering outdoor education opportunities for students across the state, encompassing both rural and urban settings, as well as districts spanning all income levels. The bill would provide students with the chance to participate in overnight, multi-day programs led by some of Maine's outstanding outdoor education and trip-leading organizations, including many of our members like Chewonki, the Ecology School, Rippleffect, Hurricane Island Outward Bound, Maine Huts & Trails, and the Appalachian Mountain Club.

The diverse landscapes of Maine, encompassing land, waterways, and the ocean, not only serve as a wellspring of inspiration for outdoor products and services but also constitute an unparalleled classroom for students. Outdoor schools can provide hands-on, holistic, interdisciplinary learning focused on science and nature, and the connection between environmental stewardship, natural resource management, and Maine’s economy. Beyond academics, these schools cultivate self-sufficiency and leadership skills, sowing the seeds for a new generation of outdoor enthusiasts. With the outdoor industry employing more than 30,000

people in the state of Maine, we also see access to outdoor education as critical in the chain of events that lead to individuals considering outdoor careers.

We believe the establishment of the Maine Outdoor School for All Act in LD 895 can reaffirm Maine's status as a national leader in outdoor recreation and further boost our outdoor recreation economy.

Thank you for your consideration,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jenny Kordick". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Jenny" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Kordick".

Jenny Kordick
Executive Director
Maine Outdoor Brands