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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Testimony of Representative Holly Eaton in support of
**LD 226, An Act to Protect the Cultural Resources and Historical Heritage of Sears
Island in Seaport 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**
Before the Environment and Natural Resources Committee

Senator Tepler, Representative Doudera, and esteemed Members of the Environment and Natural Resources Committee, My name is Representative Holly Eaton and I am submitting this written testimony in strong support of LD 226 and LD 735. As the Representative for House District 15, which includes the communities of Deer Isle, Stonington, Brooklin, Tremont, Southwest Harbor, Frenchboro, Swan's Island, Isle au Haut, and Vinalhaven, I know firsthand how decisions about Sears Island directly impact Penobscot Bay, our working waterfronts, and the marine ecosystem that sustains so many of my constituents.

LD 226 is a necessary step to protect the cultural and historical significance of Sears Island by extending conservation easements to all lands not currently under protection. Sears Island is a vital part of Maine's coastal heritage, and ensuring its preservation is essential for future generations.

LD 735 reinforces critical environmental safeguards by protecting Sears Island's sand dunes and strengthening legislative oversight for future land development. The coastal resiliency of Penobscot Bay is directly linked to protecting natural landscapes like Sears Island, which serve as buffers against erosion and climate impacts.

District 15: Brooklin, Deer Isle, Eagle Island Township, Frenchboro, Southwest Harbor,
Stonington, Swan's Island, Tremont, Isle au Haut, Vinalhaven

With industrial alternatives like Mack Point available, there is no justification for developing one of Maine's last undeveloped coastal islands. My constituents—including fishermen, conservationists, and small business owners—deserve policies that protect both our environment and our economy.

I respectfully urge the committee to vote Ought to Pass on both of these bills to ensure that Sears Island remains protected for future generations.