

Heather Henry
Calais
LD 151

Dear Health Coverage, Insurance, and Financial Services Committee Members,
I'm writing to respectfully ask you to pass LD151.

This is actually a scream for help from a small business owner with a once thriving business, but with this ever changing economy, now struggling every day to keep her doors open.

I own C&E feeds, General Market, and Calais Package Hub in Washington County. My parents opened C&E Feeds in 1982 and worked seven days a week to support Washington County farmers. I purchased the business in 2018 in an effort to continue my parents' legacy.

Bill LD 151, if passed, is one step forward in what should be a quest to make Maine a better state to do business. As it stands now, and I'm sure you know, we are one of the worst.

In 2024, We paid \$11,334 in credit card fees. I employ four others at a cost of \$10,000 a month. Ideally, that swipe fee could be used to pay my property taxes of \$7,053 and put the rest toward my property insurance of \$9472.57. Or, maybe I could use it to pay several operating license fees to the state, and my sales and use taxes to the state that total \$1,466.89. It could also help to offset my mortgage payment of \$4089 a month. My monthly inventory costs far surpass \$20,000 a month, so that's also an option. My electric bill has skyrocketed to over \$800 a month now and I probably don't even need to tell you what I pay in heating costs as I'm sure you are getting the picture. Every penny that I can save, I desperately need it to keep my doors open.

More importantly, I need to keep this family business afloat because my market supports over 90 Washington County farmers and artisans. My general market is where they bring their goods and I sell them to help support their families and farms. So that \$11,334 could also allow me to buy more of their fresh farm eggs, their cheeses, their raw milk, yogurt and pickles!

Bottom line is, Maine is one of the toughest states to do business in. Please help make it a little bit easier to keep our doors open. And, I'm not alone. Please take this first step toward making Maine better. If I can do better, my employees can do better, my farmers can do better and my community will do better.

Sincerely and appreciatively,

Heather Henry

Owner of C&E Feeds, General Market and Calais Package Hub