



March 25, 2025

**Testimony to the 132<sup>nd</sup> Maine Legislature  
Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance, and Financial Services**

Good afternoon, Senator Bailey, Representative Gramlich, and honorable members of the Committee. My name is Josh Steirman and I am here on behalf of the Maine Bankers Association. We are the trade association representing 34 retail banks operating across the State of Maine, with over 9,000 employees in virtually every community state-wide. Last year our banks provided over \$2.5 billion in residential real estate loans, and over \$3.2 billion in small business loans. Banks are deeply embedded in their communities: last year, bankers volunteered over 145,000 hours, and donated over \$18 million to charitable causes. Maine bankers are your neighbors, working to provide a safe place for deposits, modern technology solutions, fraud protection, a home mortgage, or a small business loan.

Today we are testifying in opposition to L.D. 151, *An Act to Allow Businesses to Impose a Surcharge on Credit Card and Debit Card Transactions*, and in opposition to L.D. 1031, *An Act to Allow Time-share Associations to Charge Credit Card Surcharges*.

Surcharges are simply extra cost for consumers, and an increase to a merchant's bottom line. In recent years we have all felt inflation create dramatic price increases for nearly everything that Maine people buy – and allowing surcharges would further increase the price of purchases. People across our state do not need further price hikes – so please, do not create more price inflation with these bills.

Purchases with a credit card or debit card are among the safest way to make a payment today. Significant investment in technology and cyber security has enabled a safe and secure payment system in this country which is the envy of the world. Because of this safety and convenience, it would be logical encourage card use - however these bills would discourage use of cards. Other forms of payment are equally expensive, but less secure. For example, cash presents security and theft risks, and has the additional cost for transport and safekeeping. Checks are the target of increasing fraud and criminal activity and an increasing concern, which can have dramatic costs for all parties.

The share of transactions processed with cards continues to increase, and customers show a growing preference for payment with cards. Customers should have price transparency and the freedom to continue paying with cards, without the addition of additional fees. Please consider the harm which would be done to consumers who are already feeling the impacts of price increases and inflation.

We thank the Committee for its consideration and are happy to answer any questions.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Joshua Steirman  
Director of Government Relations