



April 9, 2025

The Milkhouse
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mainemilkhouse@gmail.com

Senator Rotundo, Representative Gattine, and members of the Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs,

We own and operate The Milkhouse, an organic dairy located in Monmouth where we farm 250 acres of hay and pasture, milk about 40 Jersey cows, and produce beef and pork. Our farm also runs a state licensed creamery, and between the creamery and farm operation we employ up to 10 people during the peak growing season. As of January The Milkhouse is the only commercial dairy farm left in Monmouth, a town that not too long ago was home to many. We are writing to express our support for LD 1140 - An Act to Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue to Strengthen the Resilience and Growth of Maine's Agricultural Economy.

These funds are crucial for supporting and growing Maine's agricultural economy as well as rural development. If Maine is to reach its food sovereignty goals laid out in Maine Won't Wait then we need to make investments in our state's agriculture infrastructure, especially in building up in state processing of raw agricultural products. We are especially supportive of the dairy specific pool of money in this bill. One recommendation is to direct at least a portion of the dairy funding to a specific program like the Dairy Improvement Fund instead of just sending it to the Maine Milk Commission. This program helps dairies make infrastructure improvements and is very popular with demand regularly outstripping the available funds. Thank you for investing in the future of Maine agriculture.

Sincerely,
Andrew Smith
Caitlin Frame