



Friends of Casco Bay Casco BAYKEEPER

April 10, 2025

Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs
Maine State Legislature
Cross Building, Room 228
Augusta, Maine
AFA@legislature.maine.gov

Re: *Friends of Casco Bay's Testimony in Support of LD 560: An Act to Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue to Improve Coastal Climate Resiliency*

Dear Senator Rotundo, Representative Gattine, and Distinguished Members of the Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs,

Please accept Friends of Casco Bay's testimony in support of *LD 560: An Act to Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue to Improve Coastal Climate Resiliency* and vote that this bond act OUGHT TO PASS. Maine's coastal communities experience increasing harm from intensified coastal storms, changing water conditions and sea level rise. They need funding to meet localized needs that anticipate, prepare for and endure changing conditions. This bond will help fulfill that purpose.

For over 35 years, Friends of Casco Bay has worked to improve and protect the environmental health of Casco Bay. We collect and analyze scientific data to inform actions that keep Casco Bay healthy. We have increasingly focused on research and pilot projects designed to understand changing conditions and help the Bay adapt and evolve so it can remain healthy for future generations.

In the course of our work, we collaborate with and strive to provide assistance to the municipalities that border Casco Bay to the best of our ability. We document and track the threats they face, including, but not limited to, low lying infrastructure that cannot withstand rising sea levels; undersized culverts and low lying roads that flood and break apart during storms; serious shoreline, beach and bluff erosion; buried clam flats and eelgrass beds; and degraded water quality and acidifying conditions. The solutions to these problems are expensive and require outside funding.

Maine already knows funding is needed to support communities in this arena. In its 2020 Maine Won't Wait climate action plan (CAP), the State created grant programs that have helped communities throughout the State respond to and repair harm from the effects of changing conditions. In its 2024 updated CAP, Maine moved "resilience" front and center. The report from the Coastal and Marine Working Group (CMWG)¹ to the Maine Climate Council identified all coastal communities as "frontline communities." The CMWG did its work through the intense storms of late 2023 into 2024, and knew that

¹ As Casco Baykeeper and a convener of several collaborations focused on coastal resilience, I have served on the Coastal and Marine Working Group since 2019. I co-chair the monitoring subcommittee and actively participate in the Blue Carbon and Natural Habitats subcommittee.

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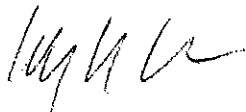
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helping coastal communities to adapt their working waterfronts, valuable fisheries industries, and tourism must be elevated in the plan. And it is.

Now Maine must pay for this work. A coastal resilience fund benefits all Mainers. It preserves our beaches, seafood, vacation and recreation opportunities, and iconic shorelines.

For the foregoing reasons, we urge this committee to vote that LD 560 OUGHT TO PASS.

Respectfully submitted,



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