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LD 1554

My name is Olivia Nardell, I am a business owner in Scarborough, Maine, and have previously worked in bakeries and food establishments across Maine and the east coast. I am in support of this bill and I think its enforcement could really better this industry and help many workers feel more comfortable and confident in their workplace.

Previously when working for a food establishment I had the unfortunate experience of being the target of sexual harassment from my manager. He constantly made remarks about my body, my weight, and if what I was currently wearing aligned with what the women he usually dated would wear. Whenever I would make it clear that these comments were not appropriate or unwanted he would quickly change what he thought to be compliments into insults. I eventually left this establishment as I was increasingly uncomfortable working alone or around this manager. I was one of many young women to do the same and feel the same way at this workplace.

If this bill is passed and enforced I have hope that situations like this would become less frequent and workers like me would feel safer at their jobs. This industry is known for sexual harassment being a prevalent issue and one that is often overlooked. If more training was provided and required not only would it possibly decrease the amount of harassment happening but also help other workers or management be aware of the signs of it happening around them and how to help stop it.

Thank you for reading my testimony and for listening to the concerns that I, along with many others in the industry, have. Please support this bill as it will have a positive impact on the safety and moral of many in the food and beverage industry.