

Dear Senator Curry, Representative Gere, and members of the Committee on Housing and Economic Development,

My name is Reo Miyake, and I am a resident of Portland, Maine. I am here today to express my strong support for LD 1336, An Act to Establish the Maine-Aomori Sister-State Advisory Council.

I have deep personal and family ties to both Maine and Aomori, Japan. My father grew up in Aomori, and after moving to Maine 15 years ago, he felt at home right away due to the shared climate and lifestyle. As I continue to build my life here, I have been eager to learn more about my father's home that shaped him.

This past week, I had the privilege of traveling to Aomori with my parents, my partner, and her mother. We explored the region's cultural history, local crafts, and food. It was incredibly meaningful to experience the place where my father grew up and to share that connection with my family.

My parents, my partner, and I are now working to open two new businesses in Portland: Aomori Restaurant and Aomori Kitchen + Market. These ventures are inspired by the ties between Maine and the Tōhoku region of Japan, and we hope they will serve as spaces where people can come together and experience their shared traditions.

As someone with a deep interest in both Maine and Japan, I know firsthand how valuable cross-cultural connections can be. The establishment of the Maine-Aomori Sister-State Advisory Council will strengthen these relationships and provide structure for future collaborations—not just in business, but in education, the arts, and community life.

I strongly urge you to support LD 1336 to help maintain and deepen this vital connection between Maine and Aomori, and to continue enriching the global perspective of our students and citizens alike.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,  
Reo Miyake  
Portland, Maine