

Hi,

I was unable to zoom into the hearings on this bill, however I did listen to the recorded session and wanted to provide testimony on behalf of the Machiasport Historical Society. Thank you for providing us an opportunity to participate in this process.

Sincerely,

Frank Rodriguez

Interim President

Machiasport Historical Society

Testimony in support of LD 762 - An Act to Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue for the Maintenance, Preservation, and Promotion of State Historic Sites

Dear members of the Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs:

Thank you for considering LD 762—An Act to Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue for the Maintenance, Preservation, and Promotion of State Historic Sites.

Built-in 1775, Fort O'Brien in Machiasport is the epicenter of American Revolutionary War activity in the Machias region and Downeast Maine. Fort O'Brien overlooks Machias Bay and the first naval engagement of the American Revolution when on June 12, 1775, Jeremiah O'Brien in the sloop Unity and Benjamin Foster in the Falmouth Packet pursued, attacked, and captured the British armed sloop HMS Margarett. This victory is celebrated every summer in Machias during the "Margarett Days Festival" and draws hundreds of tourists and history buffs to the region and Fort O'Brien.

Fort O'Brien is one of few Maine forts active during three wars—the American Revolution, War of 1812, and Civil War—and is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Although its layout was altered several times over the years, the fort's important role in protecting the Machias River and its towns remained unchanged.

This was on display when in August 1777 the British returned to avenge the loss of HMS Margarett and Fort O'Brien provided early warning to the citizens of Machias and the surrounding communities. The local militia along with their Native American allies were able to repel the British amphibious landing and for the second time in two years frustrated and defeated the British and what is known today as the "Battle of the Rim."

State funding is needed to restore Fort O'Brien and preserve its important role in the history of the American Revolution!

Sincerely,

Frank Rodriguez

Interim President

Machiasport Historical Society