

Camille White
HamFord Ventures
LD 1643

Joint Standing Committee on Housing and Economic Development^[SEP] Testimony of
Camille White^[SEP] In Support of LD 1643, An Act to Establish the Maine Life Science
Innovation Center^[SEP] April 24, 2025

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

My name is Camille White, and I am a Partner at HamFord Ventures, a real estate
investment firm in building infrastructure for Maine's life sciences sector. I am
honored to offer my enthusiastic support for LD 1643.

Earlier in my career, I had the privilege of working in Kendall Square/Cambridge,
Massachusetts, where I helped develop and manage lab and office space for some of
the world's most prolific biotech companies. In that environment, I witnessed
firsthand how purposeful infrastructure and shared vision can transform cities into
global innovation hubs.

What excites me today is seeing that same kind of energy beginning to spark here in
my home state, Maine. It's quiet but growing—and LD 1643 is the kind of catalyst we
need to nurture it into something lasting and transformative.

Here are some key reasons I support this bill:

1. Retaining and Attracting Young Talent^[SEP]

Maine's universities and colleges produce talented STEM graduates who often leave
the state due to limited career pathways in research and biotech. A centralized Life
Science Innovation Center can provide a visible anchor that encourages them to
stay—or return—to build their futures here.

2. Supporting Rural Economic Development

^[SEP]The life sciences are often seen as urban-centric, but Maine has the opportunity to
decentralize that model. With our strong rural healthcare networks, aquaculture, and
agricultural innovation, this Center could ensure that rural communities also benefit
from biotech-driven economic growth.

3. Enhancing Cross-Sector Collaboration^[SEP]

Maine has thriving sectors in agriculture, marine science, and forestry. The Center
would provide a platform for collaboration between those traditional industries and
emerging life science enterprises, unlocking innovation at their intersections—like
sustainable bio-based materials or precision aquaculture.

4. Empowering Women and Underrepresented Groups in STEM^[SEP]

By creating a centralized and visible hub with intentional workforce development
programs, the Center could play a major role in expanding access to STEM careers
for women, BIPOC individuals, and others historically underrepresented in science
and technology fields.

5. Boosting Health Resilience and Public Health Innovation^[SEP]

Life sciences don't just fuel the economy—they save lives. A vibrant R&D ecosystem
in Maine can improve health outcomes by driving innovation in diagnostics,
therapies, and preventive care, all while supporting local healthcare providers and
systems.

6. Strengthening Maine's National and Global Visibility

^[SEP]Maine is often overlooked in national biotech circles. A bold move like LD 1643
would elevate the state's profile, opening doors to partnerships with leading
institutions and companies outside the region.

7. Supporting Entrepreneurship and Commercialization^[SEP]

Beyond basic research, the Center can offer the tools and mentorship needed for
scientists and innovators to commercialize their discoveries—creating startups, jobs,
and long-term value in Maine's economy.

8. Future-Proofing Maine's Economy

Biotech and life sciences are among the fastest-growing sectors globally. Investing now ensures Maine is not only part of that growth but is building an economy that can weather future disruptions—from pandemics to climate change.

Finally, I would love to be part of this initiative in any way I can. My career has been about translating bold ideas into real spaces that support innovation—from bench to bedside. I see this as a rare opportunity for Maine to lead, and I would be thrilled to contribute to its success.

Thank you for your time, your service to our state, and your consideration of this important step forward.

Respectfully,

Camille White, Partner at HamFord Ventures LLC