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**TO:** Senator Chip Curry, CoChair; Representative Traci Gere, CoChair  
Committee on Housing and Economic Development  
Maine State Legislature

**Re: Support for the following Bill: LD 1637/ SP0645: An Act to Reform the Midcoast Regional Redevelopment Authority**

Dear Chairpersons and Members of the Committee:

I am a long-time resident of Brunswick, Maine. As a Professor of Chemistry and Biochemistry at Bowdoin College, I have published many papers on the fate and effects of various pollutants on living environmental systems. In addition, I have been the Town of Brunswick representative to the Restoration Advisory Board (RAB) for the remediation and re-use of the former Brunswick Naval Air Station (BNAS) since 2014. I am also a member of the Brunswick Area Citizens for a Safe Environment (BACSE) since 2012, an EPA-supported group promoting citizen involvement and information about issues relating to the re-use for the former BNAS. As such, I have had extensive experience with activities involving the Midcoast Redevelopment Authority (MRRA) at the former BNAS. With heightened public concern on PFAS issues at the former BNAS over the last year, I have been particularly active as a source of information and support for individuals, citizen groups, the Town of Brunswick and elected officials.

***Based on my experience, I am writing in strong support for LD 1637/ SP0645. It is an action that is long overdue.***

The actions of MRRA at Brunswick Landing and the Brunswick Executive Airport over the last 14 years have illustrated the problems associated with a State autonomous authority that is, by statute, not beholden to the local community it resides in. It is very much like a “State within a State.” Originally envisioned primarily as a commercial center, Brunswick Landing has evolved into an extensive residential development as well.

All forms of development at Brunswick Landing must adhere to Land Use Controls (LUCs), set out by the Navy as part of the re-use process for any given parcel. Upon transfer to civilian use, a given parcel at Brunswick Landing is not “clean”, as MRRA has claimed in the past, but safe to use as long as the LUCs for that parcel are adhered to. Historically MRRA has not been helpful in communicating the LUCs to owners and tenants. To mitigate this problem and to ensure LUCs are communicated to successive owners, efforts have been made over the years to get MRRA to adopt a Uniform Environmental Covenants Act, (UECA) for each parcel sold. MRRA has consistently resisted this key environmental safeguard. The inclusion of the establishment of UECAs for future properties transferred by MRRA is long overdue, and a key element of LD 1637/ SP0645. Application of UECAs to parcels transferred at Brunswick Landing ensures that environmental covenants are preserved and enforceable over a very long term against successive owners.

In addition to real estate, MRRA manages the Brunswick Executive Airport, slated to undergo ~30+ million dollars of planned expansion over the next 5 years, including a ~7 million dollar Customs Facility, the purpose of which remains unclear. The role of the Public has been secondary

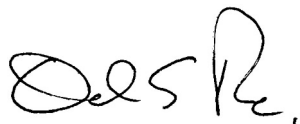
in these plans. According to MRRA's airport expansion planning consultant, Dubois & King at an April 16, 2025 info session on expansion plans, the final airport expansion plan is due to go into effect in August of 2025. The public has no control over this. This is a very important point, because the Brunswick Executive Airport is unusual due to its close proximity to residential and commercial areas, public drinking water wells, and sensitive marine and estuarine resources. These properties closely wrap around 3 sides of the airport. LD 1637/ SP0645 would ensure some level of effective local control over this major project.

MRRA is a real estate development entity and has not managed the complex military grade fire-suppression systems inherited from the Navy in the airport hangars very well. Local groups have urged MRRA over the years to take seriously, the hazards associated with the stored PFAS-based Aqueous Film Forming Foam (AFFF) materials. However, since taking over the management of the airport facilities in 2011 from the Navy, MRRA has had 3 known AFFF spills. In 2012, Hangar 6 lost 2000 gallons of PFAS-based Ansulite AFFF, which MRRA replaced with legacy stores of older PFOS-based AFFF. We are fortunate that MRRA's new Director, Dan Stevenson, has been able to rapidly secure the removal of the hazardous material in Hangar 6 after having it there for over 12 years.

In 2019, PFOS-based AFFF was spilled in Hangar 4 and in 2024, the remainder was lost in Hangar 4 when the fire suppression system was activated by an unknown cause, resulting in widespread contamination, which lingers to the present day. It is important to note that Hangar 4 is owned by the Navy and leased to MRRA. Since 2020, the Department of Defense (DoD) has ordered the removal and disposal of PFAS-based AFFF from the aviation facilities of the various Armed Services. MRRA could have requested that the Navy remove the PFOS-based AFFF from Hangar 4 pursuant to this DoD order. In fact, it was a group of concerned private Brunswick citizens who petitioned Senators King and Collins in early 2023 to seek the removal of AFFF from Hangar 4. The process to do so was initiated by the Navy within 2 months of this request and was due to begin in September 2024. Unfortunately, the August 19, 2024 Hangar 4 AFFF spill occurred first. Effective management on the part of MRRA, could have prevented the August 29 spill incident.

LD 1637/ SP0645 is an essential step in ensuring that the "State within a State" model of operating a State Authority, like MRRA, no longer applies.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. S. Page", with a stylized flourish at the end.

David S. Page, Bowdoin College Professor of Chemistry and Biochemistry Emeritus  
<https://www.bowdoin.edu/profiles/faculty/dpage/index.html>