

Bruce Kantner
Brunswick
LD 1637

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

I am writing in support of LD 1637, An Act to Reform the Midcoast Regional Redevelopment Authority (MRRA).

I have been closely following the actions of MRRA staff and board members since the toxic PFAS spill last August 19, 2024. I was dismayed by their slow response in notifying workers and residents on Brunswick Landing about the emergency spill and dangers of PFAS. I attended many meetings of our Town Council and the MRRA Board during nine months and supported repeated efforts by Councilors and Town Staff to get the AFFF systems with PFAS shut down quickly. The Navy did shut off the AFFF in Hangar 4 where the spill happened, but it took over eight months for MRRA to finally get AFFF shut down in a second hangar. Another AFFF system is still on in Hangar 5.

I've participated in conversations with the Navy and researched years of documents about the restoration of the former Naval Base and MRRA's role in redevelopment. While MRRA has accomplished strong economic goals, it has failed to care adequately for the complex issues of environmental remediation and the health and safety of the people living and working on and near the Landing. MRRA's skills and focus have been in real estate development and airport management. They have operated very independently with little regard for citizens' input and advice from the Town. They have almost no effective oversight from another government body. They have weak knowledge and skills for managing the complex environmental issues of the Landing that will continue for decades.

LD 1637 would be a modest step towards better relations with and accountability to Brunswick citizens and government. Hopefully this bill would encourage MRRA to focus more on environmental health and safety and engage experts in these areas to assist them.

I respectfully urge the Committee to vote "Ought to Pass" on LD 1637.

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