



Senator Curry, Representative Gere, and members of the Committee on Housing and Economic Development, my name is Jeff Romano testifying on behalf of Maine Coast Heritage Trust (MCHT) in support of LD 1845.

MCHT has been a long-time supporter of the Maine Working Waterfront Coalition. Two decades ago, we worked with coalition partners to establish the Working Waterfront Protection program within the Land for Maine's Future program. Around the same time, MCHT supported coalition efforts to establish a new Current Use Tax program to encourage the preservation of working waterfronts.

The Working Waterfront Advisory Council outlined in LD 1845 would build upon these and other past successes and help the state's coastal communities identify new ways to support this critical component of Maine's economy. As an organization that is focused in part on the protection of working waterfront access from Kittery to Eastport, MCHT welcomes the establishment of this new council.

We appreciate Representative Rielly's efforts to introduce LD 1845 and encourage the committee to vote in favor of the bill.

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*Maine Coast Heritage Trust seeks to advance the conservation of lands and waters in Maine to ensure ecological wellbeing and foster thriving communities. Over the past five decades, we have conserved more than 185,000 acres, including over 160 places open for traditional outdoor recreation.*