

Monique Coombs  
Brunswick  
LD 1845

To the Committee On Housing and Economic Development:

The Maine Coast Fishermen's Association (MCFA) submits this testimony in support of An Act to Establish the Working Waterfront Advisory Council.

The Maine Coast Fishermen's Association is an industry-driven nonprofit organization working to restore the fisheries in the Gulf of Maine and sustain Maine's fishing communities for future generations.

Working waterfronts are the backbone of Maine's coastal economy and culture. They provide essential access for fishermen, aquaculture businesses, marine businesses, and the many communities that depend on the ocean for their livelihoods. Despite their importance, these waterfronts face increasing challenges, from development pressures and loss of access to climate change and economic uncertainty.

This bill will help ensure Maine has a coordinated and informed approach to protecting and investing in working waterfronts by establishing a diverse advisory council that brings together voices from across the coast. It acknowledges that those who live and work along the waterfront are the ones best positioned to identify solutions and opportunities.

MCFA supports this bill because it creates space for meaningful input, prioritizes geographic and industry diversity, and facilitates ongoing dialogue between the Legislature and coastal communities. It is a critical step toward sustaining Maine's marine economy and preserving the infrastructure that supports it.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Monique Coombs

Director of Community Programs

Maine Coast Fishermen's Association