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President of the Senate

THE MAINE SENATE
132nd Legislature

3 State House Station
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Testimony of Senate President Mattie Daughtry in support of
LD 1819 , “An Act Regarding the Brunswick Naval Air Station Job Increment Financing Fund”
Before the Joint Standing Committee Housing and Economic Development

Senator Curry, Representative Gere, and esteemed members of the Housing and Economic Development Committee, my name is Mattie Daughtry and I am proud to serve as the President of the Maine State Senate, where I am honored to represent Senate District 23, which includes Brunswick, Freeport, Harpswell, Pownal, Chebeague Island and part of Yarmouth. Today, I write to express my strong support for LD 1819, An Act Regarding the Brunswick Naval Air Station Job Increment Financing Fund.

This proposed legislation is crucial for our community as we strive to recover from the challenges that have arisen, particularly in the wake of the disastrous AFFF firefighting foam spill in August 2024 on the former Naval Air Station. This unfortunate incident resulted in the release of tens of thousands of gallons of PFAS-laden chemicals into our natural environment, leaving us with pressing funding needs for the ongoing removal and remediation efforts that are paramount to protecting our local ecosystem and public health.

LD 1819 offers a vital solution to help raise the funds this part of our community needs in order to truly recover. The bill proposes that we expand the definition of "employee" to include remote workers within businesses operating under the Midcoast Regional Redevelopment Authority (MRRA). This inclusion recognizes the evolving nature of work and the importance of remote job opportunities in our economy, especially as we rebuild and strengthen our workforce. By doing so, we not only support employment in our community but also enhance the funding available through the Brunswick Naval Air Station Job Increment Financing Fund.

Moreover, this bill significantly improves the allocation of disbursements into the fund. By ensuring that 100% of the funds are directed toward our community rather than maintaining a state share, we can expedite crucial remediation projects and development initiatives that have long been awaited. Increasing the funds directed to the MRRA from 50% to 75% is a necessary adjustment that reflects the urgent needs of our region, especially following the AFFF spill that has wreaked havoc on our environmental health and community resources.

Furthermore, by clarifying that streets and roads under the jurisdiction of the MRRA are public ways, we ensure that our infrastructure developments are recognized and supported as integral components of our community's recovery and future growth.

In conclusion, LD 1819 is more than just a piece of legislation; it represents our commitment to revitalizing Brunswick and the surrounding areas while addressing the pressing environmental and economic challenges we face. I urge this committee to vote “Ought to Pass” on LD 1819, as it is vital for the prosperity and well-being of our community.

Thank you for your attention to this essential matter.