

Date: May 10, 2025
LD1864

To: The Honorable Senator Curry and Representative Gere and distinguished members of the Housing and Economic Development Committees.

Re: LD 1864, An Act to Facilitate the Reconstruction of Storm-damaged Commercial Fisheries Facilities and Infrastructure.

Dear Senator Curry and Representative Gere and distinguished members of the Housing and Economic Development Committees,

I am writing as the Chair of the Harpswell Planning Board **in support of LD1864**, An Act to Facilitate the Reconstruction of Storm-damaged Commercial Fisheries Facilities and Infrastructure.

Harpswell has the most commercial fishing licenses and the longest coastline of any town in Maine. In spite of continued pressures on the industry, we are proud that our commercial fishing businesses are still the leading income and jobs producers in our town. Some of our fishing families have been here for over 300 years.

As you know, recent severe storms and flooding have caused substantial damage to the docks, piers, wharves, fish houses and other important structures critical to the operations of these businesses. Unfortunately, state and local law makes it impossible for the Harpswell Planning Board to permit their reconstruction, resulting in the potential loss of a significant part of our fishing heritage, local jobs, and income. It is painful to have our hands tied when emergency situations force us to deny approvals to family operations that fully deserve them.

The variance provisions offered in LD 1864 would allow us a much-needed flexibility to ensure continued operation of our commercial fishing businesses. We fully support this legislation and ask for your support as well.

Sincerely,
Amy N. Haible, Chair
Harpswell Planning Board