

May 14, 2025

Senator Tim Nangle, Chair
Rep. Lydia Crafts, Chair
Joint Standing Committee on Transportation
Augusta, Maine 04333

RE: LD 1874, An Act to Enable the Maine Pilotage Commission to Oversee Pilots Operating in Portland Harbor

Dear Senator Nangle, Representative Crafts, and members of the Transportation Committee:

My name is Captain Shawn Moody, and I am a ship agent at Chase Leavitt & Co. in Portland. I am also a former merchant mariner, Maine Maritime Academy alumnus, and I have been a member of the Maine Pilotage Commission since 1999. I am writing to urge the Commission to support LD 1874, An Act to Enable the Maine Pilotage Commission to Oversee Pilots Operating in Portland Harbor, as drafted.

A ship agent is a professional responsible for fulfilling the administrative and logistical needs of a ship and its crew during a port call. For background, Chase, Leavitt & Co. was established as a ship agency in 1854 for vessels trading in the West Indies bringing molasses into Portland to be distilled into rum. We have become proficient in coordinating with local businesses, regulatory agencies, and port authorities, having a comprehensive understanding of the pertinent documentation regulations required for a successful port call. Our goal is to provide safe, cost effective and efficient port calls for vessels through our many years of maritime exposure and interface with port officials and suppliers. Throughout our 171 years of existence, Chase, Leavitt & Co. headquarters have been located in the City of Portland, but as Maine's coast developed and shipping ports expanded, so did Chase, Leavitt & Co. We now serve as ship agents for vessels calling on all ports in Maine and New Hampshire, as well as providing marine safety services and equipment to all types of vessels.

As agents, we work with maritime pilots on a nearly daily basis, as their services are required to safely navigate our customers' vessels in and out of port. The operational needs of ships calling on any port are complex, take many years to learn, and continuous research to keep up to date with the ever changing regulations and requirements. Pilots are a critical point of failure in these operational needs. It is for this reason that the Maine Pilotage Commission members include two maritime industry experts, which is the board slot I was appointed to serve in as part of the Maine Pilotage Commission. And prior to my service on the Maine Pilotage Commission, William Leavitt of Chase, Leavitt & Co. served for many years as a member of the Maine Pilotage Commission.

I support LD 1874 because it ensures fairness in the setting of rates and licensure of pilots who operate in Portland Harbor. The Maine Pilotage Commission is made up of individuals with significant maritime and pilotage experience, and the Commission is supported in its mission by able staff from the MaineDOT and the Attorney General's Office. Our Commission is skilled in setting rates, and we understand pilotage. For many decades, this has served pilots and harbors well throughout Maine. Under LD 1874, pilots in Portland Harbor would be overseen by the MPC, which would ensure that pilots in Maine's busiest port are regulated by individuals who know and understand pilotage.

The bottom line is that this is a step that is long overdue. It is time that all sea pilots in Maine be regulated by the same board comprised of maritime and pilotage experts. This is the best way to ensure port safety and a fair ratesetting process.

Thank you for your time and consideration, and I hope that you join me in supporting LD 1874.

Sincerely,

Shawn Moody

Captain Shawn Moody
Chase, Leavitt & Co.