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**Testimony of GrowSmart Maine in support of LD 1934,
An Act To Promote Responsible Outdoor Lighting**

May 14, 2025

Senator Baldacci, Representative Salisbury, and Honorable Members of the
Joint Standing Committee State and Local Government,

My name is Nancy Smith, I live in Ellsworth, and I am the CEO of GrowSmart Maine. We are a statewide non-partisan non-profit organization helping communities navigate change in alignment with smart growth. We advocate for comprehensive policies and funding for smart growth practices and outcomes.

As I mentioned when presenting to this committee as part of your orientation earlier this year, I served as House Chair of the Committee on Business, Research, and Economic Development for three terms, serving as a member of the committee in my first term as well. It was during that time that the first Dark Skies legislation was proposed, and passed with strong bipartisan support. It seemed intuitive to most of us that protecting the night sky from unnecessary light pollution makes sense on so many levels. The potential for dark skies to be an economic driver has proven true! Just think back to the amount of human and economic activity we saw across Maine last summer, not just for the eclipse, but for surprisingly frequent opportunities to see the Northern Lights! I was lucky enough to enjoy both, not too far from home.

While I don't speak for the City, I can say that as the Council develops plans to update our ordinances to encourage both housing and economic growth, there have been discussions about the importance of protecting dark skies while we do so, for those economic and quality of place reasons.

GrowSmart Maine is willing to assist the committee in any way that is helpful.

