

# Manufacturers Association of **Maine**

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15 May 2025

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Senator Curry, Representative Gere, and distinguished members of the Committee on Housing and Economic Development:

My name is Mike Roughton, and I serve as Executive Director of the Manufacturers Association of Maine. I am also a board member of the Maine Space Grant Consortium, where I serve as its treasurer. I appreciate the opportunity to submit this testimony in support of LD 1863.

On behalf of our member manufacturers, we strongly support the mission of the Maine Space Corporation to develop a coordinated space innovation ecosystem that strengthens Maine's economic and technological future. Industry needs partners who understand how to build the infrastructure, governance, and workforce necessary to support long-term growth. The Maine Space Corporation provides that leadership.

LD 1863 will give the Corporation the legal and structural clarity it needs to succeed. Codifying the Corporation as a quasi-independent state entity and instrumentality of the State ensures it can work credibly with both public and private partners. Aligning it with the requirements of a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization is equally essential—it allows the Corporation to compete for federal and philanthropic grants and to receive support from private capital.

For the companies in our membership, these legal provisions matter. They affect how we evaluate risk, how we collaborate, and how we invest in new technologies and partnerships. LD 1863 also ensures that our proprietary and technical information is protected—an important factor in any industry collaboration.

Maine is poised to become a leader in small satellite innovation, aerospace testing, and space data applications. With the Maine Space Complex, we have a unique opportunity to develop infrastructure that supports the full space technology lifecycle, while leveraging existing assets we already have in Maine's manufacturing ecosystem. But to do this, the Corporation must have legal authority and nonprofit status to coordinate these activities and attract funding.

We respectfully urge the Committee to support LD 1863. This bill will help secure the foundation we need to grow an industry that can bring high-paying jobs, private investment, and global visibility to Maine.

Thank you for your time and for your continued support of Maine's innovation economy.

Respectfully submitted, .



Mike Roughton, Executive Director

