



January 20, 2026

The Milkhouse
445 South Monmouth Road
Monmouth, ME 04259
207-933-8184
mainemilkhouse@gmail.com

Senator Rotundo, Representative Gattine, and members of the Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs,

Our names are Caitlin Frame and Andy Smith, together we own and operate The Milkhouse, an organic dairy located in Monmouth where we farm 250 acres of hay and pasture, milk about 45 Jersey cows, and produce beef and pork. Our farm also runs a state licensed creamery, and between the creamery and farm operation we employ up to 10 people during the peak growing season. As of January The Milkhouse is the only commercial dairy farm left in Monmouth, a town that not too long ago was home to many. Andy participated in the Dairy Task Force last year and serves on the boards of both the Maine Dairy Industry Association and Maine Organic Milk Producers. Caitlin serves on the board of Maine Farmland Trust. We are writing to express our support for LD 2094 - The Maine Agriculture Bond.

These funds are crucial for supporting and growing Maine's agriculture and forestry economy as well as rural development. If Maine is to reach its food sovereignty goals laid out in Maine Won't Wait then we need to make investments in our state's agriculture infrastructure. We are particularly supportive of the dairy specific pool of money in this bill, which will bolster that state's 131 commercial dairy farms. Dairies are part of the backbone of the state's agriculture economy, supporting our veterinarians, equipment dealers, and grain suppliers for all farms.

We are excited about the \$3 million allotment for the Dairy Improvement Fund. This low interest loan program helps dairies make infrastructure improvements and is very popular. The demand for this program quickly outstrips the available funds when the program opens to applications. This investment would help many more dairies make improvements and improve efficiencies, ensuring their longevity. We participated in the program to build a new labor efficient milk parlor that allowed us to expand our herd.

We also were among the first participants in the Maine Healthy Soils Program which is also funded through the AG Bond. This program provided us a grant to purchase a new manure spreader and pasture seeder, improvements we otherwise would have been unable to make. These implements will allow us to better manage soil resources and improve forage quality and

yields across our farm as well as on neighboring beef and vegetable operations with whom we cooperate. Again, these funds are crucial to ensuring that Maine farms continue to exist, thrive, and can be operated by future generations.

Thank you for investing in the future of Maine agriculture, please vote to support LD 2094 - The Maine Agriculture Bond.

Sincerely,
Andrew Smith
Caitlin Frame