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GOVERNOR

STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF MARINE RESOURCES
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AUGUSTA, MAINE
04333-0021

CARL J. WILSON
COMMISSIONER

January 28, 2026

Senator Henry Ingwersen, Chair
Representative Michele Meyer, Chair
Members, Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services
100 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333-0100

Senator Ingwersen, Representative Meyer and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services:

On behalf of the Department of Marine Resources, I am writing to affirm our support for LD 2144, *Resolve, to Establish the Working Group to Prioritize Wellness and Mental Health Resources for Heritage Industries*.

Maine's commercial fishing industry, like our other heritage industries of farming, forestry and logging, faces many challenges that can create significant stress and impact the mental well being of its participants. On a daily basis, commercial fishermen deal with the inherent dangers of their profession, resource changes that impact their livelihood, turmoil in the markets for their products, and regulatory uncertainty that calls their future into question.

DMR would welcome the opportunity to coordinate with the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry (DACF) and the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and participate in the proposed Working Group. The Commissioner or commissioner's designee will serve as co-chair. From DMR's perspective, this will be a very valuable exercise to learn more about existing resources and how they can be effectively deployed to better serve our constituency. We are prepared to engage in the concerted effort proposed in this bill and report back in December of this year with our recommendations.

In closing, we are grateful for the leadership of DACF in identifying the need for this initiative and soliciting our involvement. I am happy to address any questions that may arise during your deliberation on this bill.

Sincerely,

Deirdre Gilbert
Director, State Marine Policy
Maine Department of Marine Resources