



**To:** Members of the Appropriations & Financial Affairs Committee  
**From:** Aroostook Partnership  
**Re:** Opposition of LD 2212, Part EE  
**Date:** 18 February 2026

Dear Senator Rotundo, Representative Gattine, and Honorable Members of the Appropriations & Financial Affairs Committee:

My name is Kiersten S. Purington and I am the President & CEO of the Aroostook Partnership in Caribou, ME. The Aroostook Partnership is a unique private/public consortium of over 65 businesses, the Northern Maine Development Commission, County higher education institutions, and several regional non-profit organizations. Our mission is to ensure the economic strength, growth, and resiliency of Aroostook County.

On behalf of the Aroostook Partnership, I am writing to respectfully oppose Part EE of LD2212 which would redirect any Supplemental Budget funds from Maine's Tourism Marketing Fund.

The Tourism Marketing Fund was established in statute in 2001 to ensure that industry-generated revenue is reinvested directly into tourism promotion. Diverting these funds for unrelated purposes sets a terrible precedent and undermines the trust businesses have placed in this long-standing structure. Maine's tourism businesses generate this revenue with the expectation that it will be reinvested strategically to attract visitors, sustain operations, and grow the state's economy.

Aroostook County businesses are heavily dependent on tourism and rely on the excellent marketing and advertising conducted by Aroostook County Tourism (ACT) to effectively promote the region and attract visitors. These marketing efforts are supported by the Maine Tourism Marketing Fund and, despite tourism challenges over the last few years which includes a significant reduction in Canadian visitors to region, we have seen consistent growth driven by targeted, strategic marketing that influences where New England families and tourists are choosing to travel.

Additionally, the Aroostook Partnership is spearheading a regional rural talent attraction and retention program which relies heavily on strong, influential regional marketing to promote the positive attributes of The County as a desirable place to work, play, and live. Our marketing efforts align heavily with those of ACT and any reduction in funding will significantly and negatively impact the ability to bring people, and particularly skilled workers, to the region. This in turn will fundamentally hinder the ability to sustain a strong and resilient economy in Northern Maine.



The Tourism Marketing Fund was designated to promote, position, and attract. It delivers measurable returns, supports small businesses, and strengthens our border communities. Redirecting these funds is not the message to send to businesses, municipalities, and the people of Maine who are championing this industry with huge momentum.

I respectfully urge you to oppose Part EE of LD 2212 and protect the integrity and purpose of the Tourism Marketing Fund.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Sincerely,



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