



**Written Testimony by William Norbert  
Governmental Affairs Manager**

**In Support of L.D. 2212**

*An Act Making Supplemental Appropriations and Allocations from the General Fund and Other Funds for the Expenditures of State Government and Changing Certain Provisions of the Law Necessary to the Proper Operations of State Government for the Fiscal Years Ending June 30, 2026 and June 30, 2027*

**Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs  
Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry**

**February 27, 2026**

Senators Rotundo and Talbot Ross, Representatives Gattine and Pluecker, and Distinguished Members of the Joint Standing Committees on Appropriations and Financial Affairs and Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry:

My name is Bill Norbert. I am the Governmental Affairs Manager at the Finance Authority of Maine (FAME). I am submitting this written testimony in support of the Governor's initiative related to the Dairy Improvement Fund, which is found on page A - 44 of your materials.

The initiative adjusts funding to bring allocations in line with projected available resources for fiscal year 2025-26 and fiscal year 2026-27. It reflects a reduction of \$15,818 in FY 25-26 and a reduction of \$31,944 in FY 26-27 from casino revenues based on the latest revenue forecast. FAME administers this fund on behalf of the Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry.

The Dairy Improvement Fund Program was created by the Maine Legislature to help farms and dairy enterprises fund capital improvements to maintain and enhance the viability of their operations. Generally, any business or individual located in Maine and identified by the Department as engaged in commercial production of cow, goat, or sheep milk or cow, goat, or sheep milk products is eligible. Eligible uses include design, construction or improvement of milking parlors, dairy cattle housing, silos, grain bins, feed sheds, or the construction or renovation of buildings, or equipment, located in Maine and used in connection with a dairy enterprise. The program offers a 1% fixed interest rate on loans up to \$250,000.

We do not believe these revenue rejections will significantly impact the work of the Fund. In FY 25, this program provided two loans totaling \$358,750. This helped to retain twelve Maine jobs.

Thank you for your time and consideration.