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Testimony in Support of L.D. 2221

An Act to Amend the Composition of the Landowners and Land Users Relations Advisory Board

Sponsored by Senator Baldacci of Penobscot March 2, 2026

Good afternoon, Senator Baldacci, Representative Roberts, and distinguished members of the Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Committee.

My name is Jeff McCabe, and I serve as Director of the Maine Office of Outdoor Recreation. I am pleased to provide testimony in support of L.D. 2221, An Act to Amend the Composition of the Landowners and Land Users Relations Advisory Board.

The proposed updates to the Board's composition are an important and thoughtful reflection of the stakeholders who should be engaged in the critical conversations between landowners and land users. As outdoor recreation continues to evolve, it is essential that the Board's membership reflects the full diversity of recreation interests across our state.

Maine's outdoor recreation economy depends on maintaining continued opportunities for traditional uses — including hunting, fishing, motorized recreation, nonmotorized recreation, and boating — while also recognizing and planning for new and emerging outdoor activities. Ensuring representation from trending outdoor recreation sectors will strengthen dialogue, foster collaboration, and support balanced decision-making.

We strongly support the inclusion of three representatives of outdoor recreationists, including one representative of an all-terrain vehicle club and one representative of a nonmotorized recreation industry with a focus on hiking, wildlife watching, biking, paddling, trail running, or other popular outdoor pursuits. This broader representation ensures that the Board reflects the evolving ways in which people responsibly access and enjoy Maine's lands.

We also support the continued inclusion of non-voting seats for relevant state agencies. These positions are vital not only for sharing information and data, but also for ensuring that agencies hear stakeholder perspectives firsthand. Effective collaboration depends on clear communication and shared understanding.

Additionally, we believe that one seat for the Department of Economic and Community Development is appropriate, and we appreciate the ongoing efforts and leadership of the Departments of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife and Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry in supporting responsible land access across Maine.

Thank you for your consideration of this important legislation. I am happy to work with the committee and the staff as this bill is finalized.

Jeff McCabe Director
Maine Office of Outdoor Recreation