

**Testimony of Patrick Keliher, Commissioner  
On Behalf of The Maine Lobster Marketing Collaborative**

**Before the Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs and  
The Joint Standing Committee on Marine Resources**

**"An Act Making Unified 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, 2023, June 30, 2024 and June 30, 2025"**

Senator Rotundo, Representative Sachs, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs, Senator Reny, Representative Hepler, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Marine Resources, I am Patrick Keliher, Commissioner of the Department of Marine Resources. I am here today to present testimony on behalf of the Maine Lobster Marketing Collaborative in support of the items in the Governor Mill's FY24/25 Biennial Budget, LD 258.

This budget advances the Governor's guiding belief that to build a stronger, more prosperous state where opportunity is available to all, then we must invest in the infrastructure that supports the people of Maine, our greatest asset.

That is why this budget proposal strengthens the very things that Maine people rely on every day to succeed, building on the strong success of the currently enacted budget and the last legislative session to tackle Maine's greatest challenges.

We have governed cautiously and in a fiscally prudent way over the past four years, making sure that – even in the hardest of times during the pandemic – we lived within our means. This budget proposal continues that practice.

The Maine Lobster Marketing Collaborative (MLMC), founded in 2013, is funded by Maine lobster harvesters, dealers and processors to grow demand, both for whole live lobster and a variety of value-added products. The MLMC supports that objective by promoting the core values of the Maine Lobster industry, which are sustainability and traceability that is deeply rooted in tradition.

**Lobster Promotion Fund 0701**

The only initiative in this budget program is on **page A-522**. This initiative provides funding to recognize an increase in license surcharge revenue resulting from revenue changes in Public Law 2021, Chapter 755. Specifically, this law redirected 20% of the license revenues collected for the Maine Lobster Marketing Collaborative to a new Lobster Legal Defense Fund, beginning in August 2022 and ending in June 2024. This initiative reflects the appropriate revenue to this Fund in accordance with the current law.

This concludes the testimony of the Maine Lobster Marketing Collaborative. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.