

Senator Rotundo, Representative Sachs and distinguished members of the Joint Select Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs,

Good morning. My name is Sadie Kuhn and I am the research coordinator for MDI Bioscience at the MDI Biological Laboratory. I am testifying today in support of LD416.

I grew up in Woodstock, Vermont and in 2018 I moved to Maine to attend Colby College. During my time at Colby, I studied biology. I have always had a passion for medicine and as a kid used to perform simulations of total knee replacements on my iPod Touch. However, after a couple of years at Colby studying biology, I realized that I also had a passion for research. I ended up working in one of the microbiology labs on campus and I caught the bug that many of us researchers end up catching, which is: there's always another question that needs answering.

This interest in research led me to MDIBL last summer where I partook in the undergraduate research fellowship program, supported by the INBRE. After an amazing summer of learning new skills and developing myself as a scientist, Jim Strickland, the director of MDIBL's newest initiative, MDI Bioscience, offered me a position in his team. MDI Bioscience aims to utilize non-mammalian organisms for developing commercial tools to aid in drug discovery and assessment of environmental toxicity. This position gave me the opportunity to combine my passion for medicine and human health with my curiosity and desire to be a part of the discovery process.

The support that LD416 would provide Maine's R&D sector is critical for young professionals like myself. After spending four years at Colby, I planted roots here. I had a misconception that in order to do this kind of work, I would need to look towards places like Boston or San Francisco, but places like the Roux and MDI Bioscience give recent college graduates like myself an opportunity to work in well-paying jobs that are just up the road from the people and places that we have become so connected to.

Passage of LD416 will open up many doors for young people like myself to continue to live and work in Maine, and continue to be a part of the amazing communities that many of us cherished during time spent at Maine Universities and Colleges. With your support of LD416, we can harness the momentum that Maine has been building over the past several years to become one of the nation's leading states in biomedical research.

Thank you for your attention, and I welcome any questions you may have.