

Testimony in Support of LD 416, An Act to Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue for Research and Development and Commercialization

April 24, 2023

Senator Rotundo, Representative Sachs, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs. My name is Ed Cervone. I am the Director of Business Development at the University of New England. I am here to testify in support of LD 416.

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Maine's 10-Year Economic Development Strategy, vetted and supported by stakeholders statewide, makes a clear and strong commitment to increasing our financial investment in R&D (Action C1). Public dollars play a critical role here. Those dollars provide the foundational infrastructure needed to conduct R&D and in turn attract matching dollars. These investments attract talent, which in turn creates wealth and opportunity. It is this growth loop which will drive the Maine economy, sustaining jobs in high-growth sectors statewide.

For over two decades, Maine has pursued a strategic vision to support innovation across the economy. There have been a number of important milestones and wins in that time and we are better off now than when we started. Unfortunately, Maine has not made the commitment to invest at a level commensurate with our lofty vision. As a result, we have not progressed as far as we want or as far as we need. Despite this, Maine is home to nationally and internationally recognized research centers making advancements in life sciences, biotech, renewable energy, advanced materials, forestry, agriculture, aquaculture, and marine sciences. These research centers need a strong State of Maine partner to send a clear message to the market that Maine is serious about R&D, that we support our R&D community, and that their investment will be valued.

UNE is proud to be an important piece of Maine's R&D infrastructure with experts in life science, biotech, aquaculture, and marine science, to name a few. UNE is home to a number of research centers:

- 1.Center of Biomedical Research Excellence for the Study of Pain and Sensory Functions (COBRE)
- 2.Center for Excellence in Aging and Health
- 3.Center for Excellence in Collaborative Education
- 4.Center for Excellence in Digital Health
- 5.Center for Excellence in Neurosciences
- 6.Center for Excellence in Public Health
- 7.Maine Concussion Management Initiative
- 8.Arthur P. Girard Marine Science Center and School of Marine and Environmental Programs
- 9.The Center for North Atlantic Studies (UNE North)

Our Office of Innovation supports students, faculty, and professional staff to transform their research and ideas into market solutions with commercial viability.