

Marianne Moore
Senator, District 6



3 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333

THE MAINE SENATE
131st Legislature

**Joint Standing Committee on Innovation, Development, Economic Advancement and
Business**

**LD 2191, An Act to Provide Relief to Small Businesses Affected by Severe Weather-related
Events**

February 13, 2024

Good afternoon, Senator Curry, Representative Roberts, and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Innovation, Development, Economic Advancement and Business. My name is Marianne Moore. I proudly represent Senate District 6, which includes all of Washington County as well as 16 Communities in Eastern Hancock County.

I am here to speak as a proud cosponsor of LD 2191, *An Act to Provide Relief to Small Businesses Affected by Severe Weather-related Events*.

As we all know, our state was whacked by a series of storms in December and January. These storms caused widespread power outages, severe flooding, road washouts, and a number of fatalities. While the western part of the state got the brunt of the December 18th storm, my district was devastated by the January storms.

In response to the December storm, the Maine Grocers and Food Producers Association (MGFPA) and Retail Association of Maine (RAM) launched the Maine Business Relief Fund to support affected businesses across the state. They modeled this fund after a successful program in Vermont.

Despite the incredible generosity of Maine businesses and one anonymous mega donor, the demand for assistance was greater than available funds. The Fund's Advisory Council had to vote to close applications in early January. Additionally, since the fund was established for the purpose of assisting businesses after the December 18th storm, the assistance could not be provided to areas of the state that were hit harder by the January storms.

Many constituents are hurting. Some are facing tens of thousands of dollars in needed repairs before they can return to full operation. I am sure that the same is true with many of your districts. We must do something to help the businesses of our state recover.

I ask for your support of this important bill and will do my best to answer any questions you may have.