

Testimony supporting LD488
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Good morning esteemed members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to address you today.

My name is David Andrews, and I am here today to ask for your support of LD488. My connection with Camp Ellis in Saco, Maine spans 50 years. I spent most of my school years in Saco and many weekends there since. I inherited my childhood Camp Ellis home from my late mother.

Over the years, I have witnessed the devastating impact of storms on this historic area, many homes have been destroyed, and erosion and storm damage have not only threatened individual properties but have put the very future of this community at risk.

After the destructive storms of December 2023 and January 2024, I took action by hiring a civil engineer to help me obtain a coastal sand dune permit to protect my property. Despite my filing efforts in April 2024, the permit was denied. I then requested a site visit from the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). After persistent efforts, a visit occurred in November 2024, but it failed to provide a solution.

The DEP Field Inspector informed me that my property's location was particularly difficult and offered no immediate options which would solve the erosion problem.

My property is not on the ocean side of Camp Ellis, it lies on the cove or river side at a slightly lower elevation, which increases the impact of storm surges. During these events, tidal waters flood the street and rip through my yard, stripping away the fill from around my foundation. Over the years, this has led to lost fill which destabilizes the area around my foundation resulting in cracks, posing serious structural risks.

LD488 is essential for providing the necessary support to fortify and protect properties like mine. It offers a vital opportunity to implement measures that will safeguard our homes and ensure the resilience of our coastal communities. Many others along the coast of Maine face similar struggles, and this legislation is a crucial step in addressing these widespread challenges.

I sincerely urge you to support LD488, as it holds the promise of preserving our community's future and protecting the homes that define coastal heritage.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my story and speak on behalf of this important bill.

I would welcome any additional questions.