

PARTNERING TO END HUNGER



Good Shepherd

FOOD BANK OF MAINE

February 27, 2025

Good Shepherd Food Bank of Maine testimony to the Joint Standing Committees on Appropriations and Financial Affairs and Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry in support of LD 210, page A-103, Statewide Hunger Relief Program Z288.

Good morning Senator Rotundo, Representative Gattine, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs; Senator Talbot Ross, Representative Pluecker, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry,

My name is George Fox and I am the Chief Supply Chain Officer at Good Shepherd Food Bank of Maine. I am here today to speak in support of and to thank you for continuing to fund the Statewide Hunger Relief Program found on page A-103 of the proposed budget.

Good Shepherd Food Bank is grateful for the state's ongoing investment in this program. DACF allocates these funds to Good Shepherd Food Bank's Mainers Feeding Mainers initiative. We use all of these funds, plus an additional similar amount of donor dollars, to contract with nearly 100 farmers and food producers across the state to provide fresh, local, nutritious food to 600 charitable food agencies, such as community food pantries and soup kitchens. Through Mainers Feeding Mainers, one hundred percent of the money you allocate is directly invested back into communities statewide.

Mainers Feeding Mainers provides a reliable market for farmers and food producers statewide to sell their products at a fair, predictable price, increasing their business viability and their personal financial security. This increases our state's resilience to unpredictable changes to domestic and international supply chains. And it brings us closer to ending hunger in Maine by 2030 with local and nutritious food, fighting diet-related conditions such as obesity and diabetes.

In addition, next Thursday, the Joint Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry will hold a public hearing on LD 415. This bill increases the state's investment in Mainers Feeding Mainers from \$1M per year to \$2M per year. We know this is a tough budget year and appreciate your consideration of this increase.

In partnership,

George Fox
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Chief Supply Chain Officer

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