

March 12, 2025

Greetings Senator Tepler, Representative Doudera, and ENR Members,

My name is Nancy Galland, I live in Rockland, ME and I am testifying in support of LD 735, *"An Act to Protect Sand Dunes on Sears Island and to Establish Criteria for Legislation Regarding Land Development"*

Although I support all the language in LD 735 regarding the criteria for legislation for land development, I will only address the egregious LD2266 passed last year by the Legislature that was supposed to make way for federal funding for the wind port on the DOT-controlled parcel. I suspect it actually was counter-productive in obtaining those funds, because it couldn't pass the National Environmental Policy Act rules.

Maine has the longest tidal shoreline among coastal states, with the exception of Alaska and our sand dune protections are among the strictest in the country. As we have seen already, dunes that withstood the test of time for centuries are now eroding from the onslaught of 100-year storms coming at a pace of three in the first three months of last year in Maine.

LD 2266 included \$1 million for reconstruction of a new sand dune to be built upstage from the destroyed dune, which turns out to be wishful thinking if not a million dollar folly.

In February 2024, an article in the Washington Post reported that Sally Hacker, a coastal ecologist and professor at Oregon State University, warned that creating a hardy dune takes time. "If you plant vegetation first and let the sand build up naturally ... it could be five to 10 years before it's tall and stable enough to withstand erosion," the Post reported. "But even if it's in the right place, experts say a man-made dune might not be as resilient as one that formed naturally, especially if it doesn't have time to develop." "It's all about the root system underneath," Hacker said. "That network of roots stabilizes the dune and keeps it from eroding."

The Post offered this cautionary tale: "In Salisbury, Mass., for example, a local group spent more than \$500,000 to build a protective dune that washed away in a matter of days after a strong storm pummeled the beachside town."

Restoring the original protections of that sand dune is the only viable way to make a very poorly conceived Wrong made Right again.

Please vote "ought to pass" on LD735. Thank you.