



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Testimony of Representative Morgan Rielly in support of

LD 593, "An Act to Extend Funding for the Land for Maine's Future Program"

Before the Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry

Good afternoon Senator Talbot Ross, Representative Pluecker and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry. My name is Morgan Rielly, and I represent House District 127, which includes part of Westbrook. I am here today in support of **LD 593, "An Act to Extend Funding for the Land for Maine's Future Program."**

Our working waterfront is in dire straits. We are down to 20 miles, out of our state's 5,000 miles of coastline, of working waterfront. And, we are losing these last miles at an accelerated rate. Increasing demand for coastal properties, coupled with rising property values, has endangered working waterfronts. When a piece of working waterfront property has been bought and developed for another use, it is near impossible to recover it.

We can't lose our working waterfront to wealthy individuals and large corporate developers. It's the economic backbone of our coastal communities and an important part of our state's identity.

Under the current working waterfront covenant, a key way to preserve the working waterfront is through the Working Waterfront Access Protection Program, or WWAPP, which is funded through the Land for Maine's Future in partnership with the Department of Marine Resources.

With gentrification and the damage done by last year's storms, it is important we continue to fund this crucial program that is a part of the Land for Maine's Future Program.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration. I urge this committee to vote in support of **LD 593**.