



STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, CONSERVATION & FORESTRY
BUREAU OF PARKS AND LANDS
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TESTIMONY BEFORE THE JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE,
CONSERVATION AND FORESTRY

NEITHER FOR NOR AGAINST LD 1019

An Act to Provide Funding for Fort McClary

March 25, 2025

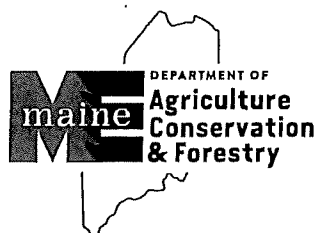
Senator Talbot Ross, Representative Pluecker, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, my name is Andy Cutko, and I am the Director of the Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands. I am speaking on behalf of the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry (DACF) as neither for nor against LD 1019, *An Act to Provide Funding for Fort McClary*.

The Bureau of Parks and Lands manages Fort McClary State Historic Site, an iconic landmark at the mouth of the Piscataquis River in Kittery Point. We appreciate the efforts of the Friends of Fort McClary and the bill's sponsors to bring attention to this State Historic Site. Like more than a dozen State Historic Sites managed by the Bureau, Fort McClary represents Maine's long and rich history.

Although there is scant written information on Indigenous peoples' activities in the region, Kittery Point's location at the mouth of the Piscataquis River suggests that this area has a vibrant history of human settlement prior to colonial times. Following colonial settlement, the site served intermittently for coastal defense in the late 17th century. Fort McClary was officially established in 1808 and was named after Major Andrew McClary, an American officer killed in the 1775 Battle of Bunker Hill. The Fort was in operation throughout the 1800s and saw active use during the Civil War. In the early 1900s, the Fort fell into disrepair, and the state of Maine acquired the property from the federal government in 1924. The Fort was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1969.

Unfortunately, funding for the Bureau's Historic Sites has been extremely limited over the years, and Fort McClary is no exception. While the bill requests \$60,000 for this site, the Bureau estimates that the site's full maintenance and historic preservation needs exceed \$2.4 million (see the table below).

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As the Committee reviews this bill, I encourage you to consider several things. First, funding for Fort McClary is not within the Governor's budget proposal. Second, while the Bureau would welcome earmarked funds for any of our fifteen State Historic Sites, we have numerous sites in need of significant funding. In fact, the Bureau estimates a backlog of deferred maintenance of more than \$30 million, and the Committee should be aware of a precedent that might be set by funding specific sites one at a time rather than a more holistic approach to funding these sites.

If the Committee does move forward with LD 1019, the Department requests that the funding be directed to BPL rather than the Town of Kittery. As a state-owned facility, it would be most efficient if the Bureau received funds to conduct any planned work.

I am glad to answer questions here or at the work session.

Estimated Needs at Fort McClary State Historic Site

Structure/Feature	Estimate
1844 Blockhouse	\$1,000,000
1808 Rifleman's House	\$75,000
1808 Powder Magazine Building	\$40,000
1865 Powder magazine section of the Bastion	\$50,000
1865 Granite Stone Wall by the parking lot	\$100,000
1860's Foundation of the barracks	\$50,000
Stone retaining wall on the north side of the blockhouse	\$75,000
Caponier	\$25,000
Fall Protection Fencing	\$20,000
Parking lot	\$50,000
Picnic Area	\$750,000
Picnic Area Parking Lot	\$50,000
Interpretation/education needs	\$50,000