



**Testimony of the Maine Office of Community Affairs
Director Samantha Horn
March 27, 2025**

Before the Joint Standing Committee on Marine Resources

**Neither For Nor Against LD 1026
An Act to Provide Mapping Services for Aquaculture Lease Siting**

Senator Tepler, Representative Hepler, and Members of the joint standing committee on Marine Resources, my name is Samantha Horn, Director of the Maine Office of Community Affairs. I am testifying neither for nor against, but to provide information related to LD 1026, An Act to Provide Mapping Services for Aquaculture Lease Siting.

The Maine Office of Community Affairs, or MOCA, was created in 2024 to foster communication and partnerships between the State and communities in this State. Our charge is to engage with municipalities, tribal governments and regional councils to provide coordinated and efficient planning, technical assistance and financial support to better plan for challenges, pursue solutions and create stronger, more resilient communities.

We support the goal of putting tools in the hands of municipal leaders that allow the community to effectively deliberate and comment on proposed uses of local waters. As there are a number of mapping initiatives and tools available today, MOCA has begun a discussion with the sponsor to see whether one of the existing tools can be expanded to cover the needs. In particular, there is an aquaculture mapping application in the Community Intertidal Data Portal that may be suitable if modified and expanded beyond Casco Bay. If we can aggregate tools in one place, it will be easier for communities to find those services and for state agencies and other organizations to provide appropriate technical assistance. I look forward to continued discussions with Senator Reny to find a solution that is a good fit for coastal communities' needs.

Thank you for your time. I am happy to provide information for the work session, should you have any questions.