



**BACKCOUNTRY
HUNTERS & ANGLERS**
NEW ENGLAND

April 10, 2025

Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs
c/o Office of Fiscal and Program Review
5 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333

Re: Testimony in support of LD 362 - An Act to Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue to Replenish the Land for Maine's Future Program

Senator Rotundo, Representative Gattine, and Members of the Committee:

I am Robert Bryan, resident of Harpswell, and I am here today representing the Maine members of Backcountry Hunters and Anglers. Backcountry Hunters and Anglers is a nationwide organization with local chapters that advocate for public land conservation and public access opportunities for hunting and fishing, as well as the conservation and sound management of wildlife and wildlife habitat.

I am testifying today in strong support of LD 362.

Maine is 94% privately owned, and historically many landowners have allowed respectful recreationists access to their lands. However, that tradition is being lost to changing land use and ownership patterns as land is developed and "POSTED" signs proliferate. Meanwhile, Maine's population is growing and demand for outdoor recreation is increasing. To date we have been fortunate that LMF projects have helped to ensure public access to more than a half-million acres in Maine for hunting, fishing, trapping, and the full range of other recreational uses. Because LMF guarantees access for hunting and angling when safety permits, it is a critical program for women, men, and families who enjoy these outdoor pursuits. However, LMF is running out of money, and it is time to ask the voters pass a bond issue to continue this critical work.

We wish to thank the co-sponsoring legislators for the support of this bill and encourage the Committee to endorse LD 362.

Sincerely,

Robert Bryan
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