



Thank you Senator Hickman, Representative Supica and Members of the Committee:

My name is Jennifer Lever I am a resident of South Portland and I'm here today as the President of the Maine Brewers Guild as well as the President of Baxter Brewing Company in Lewiston, Maine. I appreciate the opportunity to weigh in on the proposed changes and add my voice in support of this bill as well as to highlight the critical importance of fair and accessible manufacturing licensing—rooted in the values of local production and consumer transparency.

Baxter Brewing was not just one of the first breweries in the state to can its beer—it was one of the first in New England, and has worked tirelessly over the last 14 years to continue to contribute to an industry that brings in over \$260 million annually to our state's economy. Baxter's impact goes beyond dollars and cents. Located in the revitalized Bates Mill, the brewery has been a catalyst for Lewiston's downtown resurgence. It has brought renewed life to a historic mill town, created over 50 jobs for Mainers and supports countless other businesses through its partnerships with local farms, distributors, artists, event organizers and our philanthropic efforts.

We are not just brewing beer; we are building community and opportunity for those within it and beyond.

Each can of Baxter beer represents a deep investment in Maine:

- Agricultural support through local ingredient sourcing
- Environmental responsibility through sustainable brewing practices
- Community development through sponsorships and charitable giving
- And most importantly, economic stimulation through job creation, hospitality, and tourism

In an era where we are all striving to build stronger local economies and support homegrown businesses, the ability for businesses to surpasses the challenges of creating, manufacturing and producing their own products are only growing. As the small business of Maine Craft beer navigate these challenges and use their innovation and collaboration to further invest in our great state, we strongly believe this should be protected and celebrated.

At its core, a manufacturing license is not just a permit—it's a promise. A promise to produce something real, something rooted in Maine. A promise to the consumer that the product in their hand was made by a company that is accountable, visible, and traceable.

Transparency builds trust in the marketplace. When consumers know who made the beer, where it was brewed, and how it was handled, they're not just buying a beverage—they're



investing in authenticity. That trust drives loyalty, and that loyalty builds brands that last—and stay—right here in Maine.

We urge this committee to support policy that ensures:

Supporting manufacturing licenses for legitimate local producers strengthens Maine's reputation as a leader in quality, integrity, and innovation. As the many breweries here today will attest, we have already shown what's possible when we invest in our own. Let's give them—and others—the tools to keep growing, creating, and contributing.

This industry is one that many want to be apart of. We welcome the introduction and expansion of growth to our fellow Maine brewers and strongly believe that by adapting the statute to ensure equal access-to-market for all beverage manufacturers, we will better ensure a fair and supportive playing field long term for Maine based job creation, small business manufacturing, and the continued health of locally made craft beverages.

Thank you for your time and consideration today, and I ask for you to support this important legislation. I'm happy to answer questions or speak further on the subject as needed.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Lever