

April 2025



To: The Committee on Inland Fisheries and Wildlife

RE: LD 1441 – Resolve, to Establish the Commission to Study the Future of Recreational Access in Maine

Senator Baldacci, Representative Roberts, and members of the Committee on Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, my name is Stacey Keefer, Director for the Maine Marine Trades Association (MMTA). MMTA represents over 120 Maine businesses and an industry comprised of boatyards, boat builders, marinas, boat dealers, and marine retailers.

On behalf of the members of MMTA, we would like to express our appreciation for Senator Black's proposed resolve that would focus on access for outdoor recreation activities in Maine. The bill summary mentions "other areas of high interest in the State." We would like to suggest that coastal access and boating access should be considered in the Commission's study and ask the Committee to consider adding a boating-related organization to the proposed Commission. For example, we hope the Committee will report on the concern regarding increases in mooring placements in coastal and inland waters that are starting to choke out access for boaters who wish to anchor. Boaters refer to this scenario as "mooring pollution" where moorings are placed but left vacant most of the season. Access to coastal preserves and islands is another issue for boaters in Maine.

Recreational boating and fishing are leading contributors to the Maine Outdoor Rec Economy. The federal government's Bureau of Economic Analysis data indicates that the activities of recreational boating and fishing surpass the combined value added by hunting, snow activities, hiking, camping, ATVing, equestrian, bicycling, and recreational flying in Maine. (source <https://www.bea.gov/data/special-topics/outdoor-recreation>).

In recent years our organization has been involved in developing the Maine Outdoor Recreation Economy Roadmap in partnership with several agencies and many statewide organizations and businesses. trailblazerroadmap.com/roadmap/. This proposed Commission could help focus on several sections in the Roadmap, especially under Goal 2 which aims to "Increase and Sustainably Manage Outdoor Recreation." We believe that state agencies are aware of the benefits and challenges for outdoor recreation in Maine, and we appreciate prioritizing the topic of access. If this resolve moves forward, we would also appreciate keeping boating and coastal access included in the scope of the discussion.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Stacey Keefer".

Stacey Keefer
Maine Marine Trades Association, Executive Director