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TESTIMONY BEFORE THE JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT  
AND NATURAL RESOURCES

NEITHER FOR NOR AGAINST LD 630

*Resolve to Implement Portions of the 'Protecting Maine's Beaches for the Future: 2017 Update'  
Report Regarding Beach Nourishment and Dune Restoration Projects*

April 29, 2025

Senator Tepler, Representative Doudera, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Environment and Natural Resources, my name is Ryan Gordon. I am the State Geologist and Director of the Maine Geological Survey (MGS). I am speaking on behalf of the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry (DACF) as neither for nor against LD 630, *Resolve, to Implement Portions of the 'Protecting Maine's Beaches for the Future: 2017 Update' Report Regarding Beach Nourishment and Dune Restoration Projects*.

MGS supports many of the goals of the 2017 Integrated Beach Management Program Working Group Report and the proposed amendment to LD 630, and already acts to further many of these goals. MGS marine geologists provide technical assistance to coastal municipalities to manage coastal erosion and to help design shoreline management projects. MGS also provides DEP with reviews of permit applications that involve modification, construction, or nourishment of beach or dune shorelines.

MGS would play a central role in mapping sand sources for beach nourishment projects under Section 1, Paragraph 2 of the proposed amendment. However, this mapping initiative presents several significant challenges that warrant careful consideration:

The scope and scale of mapping must be clearly defined:

- Geographic coverage (statewide vs. southern Maine focus)
- Boundaries (offshore and inland extent)
- Data collection methods (existing data vs. new field research)

Field research would be essential to determine:

- Sediment volumes
- Grain size characteristics
- Sorting properties

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Additionally, mapping sand resources requires distinct expertise and equipment for both land and marine environments. Given these factors, we cannot accurately estimate required resources until the project scope is clearly defined. A comprehensive mapping effort would require:

- Multiple scientific personnel
- Multi-year commitment
- Specialized equipment not currently in MGS inventory

Furthermore, even with complete sand source maps, identified deposits may not be suitable for specific projects due to:

- Grain size incompatibility
- Environmental restrictions
- Permitting requirements

Each beach nourishment project would still require site-specific testing and evaluation.

To that end, while we understand the bill before us today proposes recommendations based on the 2017 workgroup report, we question the scope and parameters of the amendment and will have a better understanding of the impacts on resources and staff time pending further discussions with the committee and bill sponsor.

Thank you for your time. I would be happy to answer any questions now or at the work session.