



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Testimony of Representative Holly Eaton in support of

**LD 1477: An Act to Provide an Exemption from Pilotage Requirements for Passenger Ferry
Service Between Bar Harbor, Maine and Yarmouth, Nova Scotia**

Before the Joint Standing Committee on Transportation

Senator Nangle, Representative Crafts, and members of the Transportation Committee, for the record, my name is Holly Eaton, and I represent House District 15, which includes the island communities of Deer Isle, Stonington, Isle au Haut, Frenchboro, Swan's Island, Vinalhaven, Brooklin, Tremont, and Southwest Harbor. I am testifying today in support of LD 1477.

Although Bar Harbor is not within my legislative district, I recognize the broader regional impact of reliable ferry service for the Downeast economy and coastal communities across Hancock County and beyond.

Ensuring that international ferry service between Bar Harbor and Yarmouth, Nova Scotia remains viable is important for regional transportation, economic opportunity, and workforce development. Given the staffing challenges faced across maritime industries, including the ferry services that support my island constituents, it makes sense to modernize requirements where appropriate.

Allowing vessels that meet clear and appropriate standards — including an American crew and properly licensed masters — to operate without requiring a state pilot on every trip is a smart, pragmatic approach.

This change helps manage costs, prevents unnecessary staffing burdens, and frees up specialized maritime professionals for areas where their expertise is most critically needed.

I believe LD 1477 offers a thoughtful way to balance public safety with operational flexibility and workforce realities. I respectfully urge the committee to support LD 1477.

Thank you for your time and consideration, and I am happy to answer any questions.

District 15: Brooklin, Deer Isle, Eagle Island Township, Frenchboro, Southwest Harbor, Stonington,
Swan's Island, Tremont, Isle au Haut, Vinalhaven