



**Testimony of the Maine Office of Community Affairs  
Director Samantha Horn  
May 8, 2025**

**Before the Joint Standing Committee on Housing and Economic Development  
In Support of LD 1845 An Act to Establish the Working Waterfront Advisory Council**

Senator Curry, Representative Gere, and distinguished Members of the joint standing committee on Housing and Economic Development, my name is Samantha Horn, Director of the Maine Office of Community Affairs. I am submitting written testimony in support of LD 1845 An Act to Establish the Working Waterfront Advisory Council.

The Maine Office of Community Affairs, or MOCA, was created in 2024 to foster communication and partnerships between the State and communities in this State. Our charge is to engage with municipalities, tribal governments and regional councils to provide coordinated and efficient planning, technical assistance and financial support to better plan for challenges, pursue solutions and create stronger, more resilient communities.

Working waterfronts are a precious and limited resource that keeps Maine's economy and culture strong. Maine Won't Wait and the Governor's Infrastructure Rebuilding and Resilience Commission have highlighted the vulnerability of our working waterfronts and challenged us to protect and strengthen them.

The Maine Coastal Program is proposed in the biennial budget to be transferred to MOCA, and the \$69M NOAA grant supports a working waterfront coordinator position. A working waterfront advisory council, staffed by that working waterfront coordinator, would be an efficient and inclusive way for stakeholders and rights holders to provide perspective, and policy and implementation advice to the Administration. The council's annual report to the legislature will give an important overview and policy recommendations to legislative committees and provide a mechanism for reporting out legislation responsive to those recommendations as needed.

I have discussed this with the Department of Marine Resources, and we have agreed that the Coastal Program within MOCA is a good place to house this function, with frequent coordination with DMR.

For those reasons, the Administration supports LD 1845. Thank you for your time. I am happy to answer your questions and provide information for the work session.