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Testimony of Matt Burns
Maine Department of Transportation
Before the 132nd Legislature, Joint Standing Committee on Transportation

In Support

LD 1874, An Act to Enable the Maine Pilotage Commission to Oversee Pilots Operating in Portland Harbor

Senator Nangle, Representative Crafts, and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Transportation, my name is Matthew Burns. I am the Deputy Director of the Office of Freight and Business Logistics at the Maine Department of Transportation. I am speaking in support of LD 1874, *An Act to Enable the Maine Pilotage Commission to Oversee Pilots Operating in Portland Harbor*.

Sea pilots play a significant role in the safe navigation of commercial vessels to and from Maine's ports and reduce the risk of marine casualties. The Maine Pilotage Commission oversees the majority of sea pilots licensed in Maine, except for the Portland Pilots, which is currently overseen by the Portland Board of Harbor Commissioners. MaineDOT believes that it is practical and in the best interest of the state to have all sea pilots licensed in the state under the jurisdiction of the Maine Pilotage Commission. MaineDOT has worked with the Maine Pilotage Commission, and the pilots to recommend making this change, and supported the work process over the course of six Commission meetings to draft the bill and provide feedback.

LD 1847 as written, and with proposed amendments has been vetted thoroughly by MaineDOT, the Portland Harbor Commission, and Maine Pilotage Commission to ensure that the interests of all parties have been considered. MaineDOT also provides staff members who are experienced maritime industry professionals to work with the Maine Pilotage Commission and provide support for its work, and legal counsel for the Commission is provided by the Maine Attorney General's Office. Including the Portland Pilots in the purview of the Maine Pilotage Commission will ensure that the pilots are all included in the same system of pilotage but also create the same level of oversight and support for pilotage services for all of Maine's licensed sea pilots.

The pilotage system, as defined in statute, is an important spoke in the wheel of transportation safety. This bill is a commonsense approach to ensuring accountability, support, and oversight is consistent throughout the state. Ensuring that a centralized state commission that is responsible for rate setting and licensure is the most practical way to guarantee accountability for this

important work to the people of Maine. MaineDOT respectfully requests the committee to vote ought to pass to enhance the ability of the Maine Pilotage Commission to be responsible for sea pilots throughout the state. MaineDOT has also reviewed the proposed amendments and supports the changes requested by the Portland Board of Harbor Commissioners. I am happy to answer any questions from the Committee and thank you for your consideration.