



# Maine Credit Union League

*In Support of **LD 2040: An Act to Survey Food Insecurity in Maine***

Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

January 7, 2026

Good afternoon, Senator Talbot Ross, Representative Pluecker, and esteemed members of the Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry Committee. My name is Jen Burke, and I am the Vice President of Outreach and Strategic Initiatives at the Maine Credit Union League. The Maine Credit Union League is the trade association for Maine's 48 credit unions—financial cooperatives that proudly serve more than 750,000 members statewide. We respectfully submit this testimony in support of LD 2040.

For more than 36 years, Maine credit unions have played a meaningful role in addressing food insecurity across our state. Through Maine Credit Unions' Campaign for Ending Hunger, credit unions have collectively raised nearly \$15 million to support local organizations working to keep Mainers fed. Funds raised through the Campaign stay in Maine and support food pantries, soup kitchens, schools, and organizations such as Good Shepherd Food Bank and Full Plates Full Potential.

Credit unions, their employees, and their members care deeply about fighting hunger because they see food insecurity in their communities every day. Hunger does not discriminate—it affects children, seniors, working families, and individuals in both rural and urban areas, including many who are employed full-time or juggling multiple jobs. Food security and financial security are closely connected, which is why Maine's credit union movement has been committed to addressing this solvable problem for decades.

Our League was honored to participate in the development of Maine's Roadmap to End Hunger. That collaboration, along with our ongoing work alongside community partners, has reinforced the importance of addressing immediate needs while also preventing food insecurity from increasing in the future.

Today, work is entering a new phase. Many of our partners are navigating funding challenges, increased uncertainty, and evolving program requirements. At the same time, the U.S. Department of Agriculture announced late last year that it would discontinue its Household Food Security Report—a long-standing, nationally recognized resource for measuring hunger. This report has historically served as an important benchmark for policymakers and advocates seeking to evaluate whether strategies to reduce food insecurity are effective.

In light of these changes, LD 2040 offers Maine an opportunity to ensure continuity in how we understand and respond to hunger within our own state. By collecting and analyzing key data—such as geography, age, and race—this legislation will help those working to implement Maine's Roadmap to End Hunger better identify gaps, target resources, and measure progress over time. Without reliable and consistent data, it becomes far more difficult to know whether we are making meaningful progress or if food insecurity is growing.

For these reasons, we appreciate Representative Pluecker's leadership on this issue and respectfully urge the Committee to vote favorably on LD 2040. Access to accurate information does not solve hunger on its own, but it is essential for ensuring policies and investments are effective and responsive to real needs. Feeding our neighbors has always been a shared priority in Maine, and we are confident the Legislature will continue that tradition by advancing this important legislation. Thank you for your time and consideration.