



Maine Dairy Industry Association  
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Annie Watson, President  
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**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE OF APPROPRIATIONS and  
FINANCIAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE**

**“An Act to Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue to Support Maine’s Agriculture and Forestry Sectors”**

Senator Rotundo, Representative Gattine and honorable members of the Appropriations and Financial Affairs Committees. My name is Heath Miller and I am a dairy farmer from Newburgh, along with 2 other generations we milk 270 cows and raise 250 heifers. I also alongside Annie Watson represent the Maine Dairy Industry Association. MDIA represents 131 dairy farms of all sizes and production methods. Im here today in overwhelming support of LD 2094

As I talk with and visit Maine dairy farms I see and hear first hand the daily struggles. Many of these struggles tie directly to lack of current infrastructure investment. Since the onset of the pandemic our farms have seen interest rates double and building materials triple. This is way more than farmers being able to continue in a life we love. It's about being able to have a local secure food supply within the state we all love. Let us never forget what it was like in 2020 to see our store shelves nearly bare. Farm investment is crucial to enticing the next generation to commit to a life on the farm.

In preparing for this testimony I took some time to review the different programs this proposed bond would fund. All the ag specific programs except the Drought Relief program would very much benefit all of our Dairy producers. This bond would be utilized by all ag producers while increasing funding to already proven programs.

This bond will benefit every Maine tax payer by helping to insure a safe local sustainable food supply, open land for recreation and carbon sequestration.

I urge each of you to support LD2094. Id be happy to answer questions today or please feel free to reach out to Annie or I if we can answer questions specific to dairy.

Sincerely  
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