

**TESTIMONY OF
Meredith Mendelson
Department of Marine Resources**

**The Department of Marine Resources (DMR) is testifying
In Support of**

**LD 2069 An Act Designating July 21st as Maine Commercial Fishing Remembrance Day
Before the Committee on State and Local Government**

Sponsored by Representative Tuell

Date of Hearing: January 21, 2026

Senator Baldacci, Representative Salisbury and members of the Joint Standing Committee on State and Local Government, my name is Meredith Mendelson, and I am the Deputy Commissioner of the Department of Marine Resources. I am testifying on behalf of the Department in support of LD 2069.

In 2025, at the request of Green and White Hope Inc., a nonprofit organization focused on saving lives of commercial fishermen and bringing every fisherman home to their families and communities, Governor Mills issued a proclamation commemorating July 21, 2025 as Commercial Fishing Remembrance Day. The selection of that particular date was deliberate, as it was two years to the day that the Michaud family lost Tylar Michaud, an 18-year-old lobsterman from Steuben.

LD 2069 would make observance of this day an annual occurrence, ensuring that there is ongoing opportunity to remember and reflect on those Maine fishermen who are lost at sea in pursuit of their livelihoods. In doing so, it will also ensure that there is an ongoing opportunity to recognize the dangers associated with commercial fishing, and place renewed emphasis on efforts to mitigate those risks.

The Department of Marine Resources strongly supports efforts to support a culture of safety for commercial fishermen. For over 20 years, DMR has administered the Commercial Fishing Safety Council, which is charged with advising the Commissioner on fishing safety issues. More recently, DMR supported legislation advanced by Representative Strout to create a Department administered Fund that can accept donations to improve safety in the commercial fishing industry and improve the department's ability to conduct search and rescue and recovery operations

In the aftermath of loss that too many Maine families and communities have experienced, it is important to find ways to advance positive change. For this reason, the Department supports LD 2069.

Thank you for your consideration and I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.