

From: Michael Michaud michaelhmichaud@gmail.com
Subject: Written Testimony
Date: January 27, 2026 at 9:02 PM
To: Chip Bishop chipster@myfairpoint.net

Chip,

Attached is a copy of my testimony for tomorrow. I've texted Senator Baldacci to let him know I support the legislation and that I will be submitting written testimony. I'll also call the committee clerk tomorrow and touch base with the Department.

The committee will need 15 copies—happy to print them here if that's helpful, please let me know.

Thanks,
Mike

Senator Baldacci, Representative Salisbury, and members of the Committee:

My name is Mike Michaud. I am a resident of East Millinocket and serve on the East Millinocket Board of Selectmen. I am submitting testimony in support of **LD 2139**.

Senator Baldacci, Representative Salisbury, and members of the Committee:

My name is Mike Michaud. I am a resident of East Millinocket and serve on the East Millinocket Board of Selectmen. I am submitting testimony in support of **LD 2139**.

I regret that I am unable to testify in person today due to a previously scheduled medical appointment, but I appreciate the opportunity to submit written testimony in support of this resolve.

I would like to begin by thanking Senator Stewart for sponsoring this resolve and for his leadership on issues affecting rural Maine communities. I would also like to thank the Department of Administrative and Financial Services for its work in drafting and supporting this legislation and for engaging constructively with the Town of East Millinocket throughout this process.

East Millinocket is one of the smallest towns in Maine by total land area, with approximately 4,500 acres within its municipal boundaries. Unlike many neighboring rural communities, the town's land base is extremely limited. This constraint affects economic development, housing availability, and long-term community sustainability.

More than half of the land within East Millinocket's boundaries is owned by the State of Maine. While physically located within the town, this land does not contribute to the taxable base and cannot be planned for housing or community development. As a result, the town faces a structural disadvantage compared to other Maine communities.

The town has taken proactive steps to support economic redevelopment, including acquiring the former mill site. While essential to regional economic recovery, that site is largely dedicated to industrial reuse and is not suitable for addressing broader community needs such as housing or neighborhood-scale development.

As East Millinocket works to rebuild its economy, housing has become an increasingly urgent challenge. Employers considering investment in the region consistently cite the lack of available housing as a barrier to workforce recruitment and retention. With such a limited land base, the town has few options to address this need without access to additional land already located within its borders.

LD 2139 does not mandate a sale or require immediate action. Instead, it provides a responsible framework that allows the town to plan carefully, conduct due diligence, and pursue funding over time. It does not expand municipal boundaries or create new development pressure in surrounding communities. Rather, it allows the town to plan for land already within its borders that currently provides limited benefit to either the State or the community.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Committee to support **LD 2139**. I look forward to working with the Committee as this resolve moves forward to a work session.

Thank you for your time and consideration.