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**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON INLAND
FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE**

IN SUPPORT OF LD 2221

An Act to Amend the Composition of the Landowners and Land Users Relations Advisory Board

March 2, 2026

Senator Baldacci, Representative Roberts, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, my name is Jo D. Saffair, and I am the Deputy Commissioner of the Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry (DACF). I am testifying in support of LD 2221, *An Act to Amend the Composition of the Landowners and Land Users Relations Advisory Board*.

This bill is an outcome of the work completed last month by the Public Access to Private Land Working Group. That Group, which DACF and the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife co-chaired, was charged with recommending actions and policies to incentivize private landowners to maintain and expand recreational access to their lands and thereby ensure Maine's continued tradition of public recreational access to private land. As you heard in the report-out presented to this Committee a couple of weeks ago, the Working Group's consensus recommendations covered topics such as enforcement, education and outreach, legislation, landowner liability, land conservation, and more.

The Working Group also recommended this action before you today, to update the membership of the Landowners and Land Users Relations Advisory Board, to "be used as an ongoing forum to continue discussions, monitor emerging issues, and advance the recommendations outlined in [the] report." The Working Group recognized that this Advisory Board, with expanded membership, would have the expertise and commitment necessary to ensure the recommendations are implemented.

DACF strongly supports the proposed additions to the Advisory Board and looks forward to this Board actively working to implement the Working Group's recommendations.

Thank you for your consideration. I would be happy to answer any questions now or at the work session.

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