



Testimony in support of LD 174, An Act To Implement the Recommendations of the Ending Hunger by 2030 Advisory Group.

January 18, 2022

To Senator Dill, Representative O'Neil and the members of the Joint Standing Committee On Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry,

My name is Kristen Miale and I am the President of Good Shepherd Food Bank of Maine. We have a network of more than 500 partner agencies, supporting our mission to eliminate hunger in Maine by improving access to nutritious food for people in need, building strong community partnerships, and mobilizing the public in the fight to end hunger.

Food Bank staff from across the organization joined a diverse and inclusive list of stakeholders engaged by the Ending Hunger by 2030 Advisory Group. Advisory Group meetings were frequent, well organized, and comprehensive. It provided a process through which many could come together to create a measurable, achievable, and action-oriented strategic plan for making the vision of ending hunger in Maine by 2030 a reality.

The resulting plan has five goals; build and fund the infrastructure to end hunger, innovate in the charitable food sector so it is more people-centered in meeting emergency needs, build an economy that works for everyone so far fewer people rely on the charitable food sector, change the narratives about poverty, and center equity in all of our work. The work of the Food Bank touches all of these, and centers on innovation in the charitable food sector.

The Advisory Group has affirmed that the state, the Food Bank, and so many other stakeholders are true partners in this work. Likewise, this work has affirmed that food alone will not solve hunger. The Food Bank remains committed to supporting and strengthening the charitable food sector, and is planning to use the recommendations of the Advisory Group to build our advocacy agendas. Indeed, we see the Advisory Group's resulting work plan as our guidepost to informing our ending hunger work for the future.

We support LD 174, and urge you to support it as well.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Kristen Miale
President, Good Shepherd Food Bank of Maine