

January 19, 2022

To: The Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs

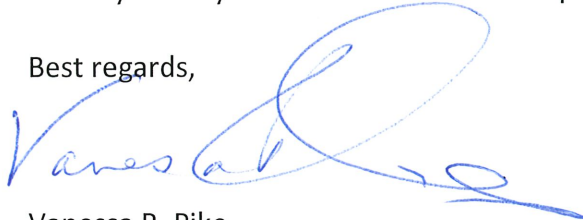
RE: LD1389: An Act to Improve Maritime Education in Maine

Senator Rafferty, Representative Brennan, and members of the Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs, my name is Vanessa Pike. I am the General Manager of Fore Points Marina, a 150-slip marina on the eastern waterfront of Portland. We provide highly sought-after dockage for over 130 seasonal (local) boaters, 12 dedicated mega yacht berths, and a considerable amount of dockage for transient boaters visiting our state from around the country and world. We employ seven team members year-round, and an additional thirty(+) throughout the peak summer months. I also serve on the board of Maine Marine Trades Association as I firmly believe that growth and prosperity in Maine's marine industry benefits and increases the quality of life for my marina members, my industry peers and their customers, our collective staffs, and the community.

Our industry, like many others, is however currently threatened by a lack of workforce. I believe the base of establishing a strong work force is at its youngest opportunity, often within the school system. To that end, the health and existence of Maine Ocean School is a vital component to our livelihood. Albeit in its infancy, the base and future outcome of this school will produce young adults willing and able to explore marine related careers. This is an educational program we cannot afford to lose. To that end, I am writing to ask you to please remove (or at least extend) the sunset clause, allowing the committee time to procure a more sustainable, long-term governance. The Maine Ocean School is, and will continue to be, a valued asset for students and industry professionals throughout the state of Maine.

Thank you for your consideration and helping us to keep this valuable resource in place.

Best regards,



Vanessa R. Pike
General Manager
Fore Points Marina
vpike@forepointsmarina.com
207-517-4860