

John Burns
South Portland

Dear Senator Stacy Brenner, Representative Ralph Tucker, and the Distinguished Members of the Environment and Natural Resources Committee:

I am writing to ask that the Environment and Natural Resources Committee vote that LD 1572: Resolve, To Analyze the Impact of Sea Level Rise, ought to pass because:

Seas are rising. Scientific consensus predicts Maine will suffer from at least 1.5 feet of sea level rise by 2050 and 3.9 feet by 2100. Maine's coast will see increases in nuisance flooding, loss of coastal habitats and beaches, and inundation of coastal infrastructure, such as wastewater treatment plants, roads, culverts, and crossings. The impact cannot be understated.

Flooding and storms are surging. 1-foot of sea level rise alone is projected to result in a 15-fold increase in nuisance flooding, and climate change is expected to increase the frequency of "100-year" storms to occur once every 10 years. These impacts will cause substantial disruptions for coastal communities and the fishing, tourism, and port industries that support them. As a coastal resident, the impact will be significant. I am a seventh-generation coastal resident of a family property and I would be devastated to see such family history sink into the sea due to our negligence.

Coastal ecosystems may drown. 1.6-feet of sea level rise is anticipated to submerge 67% of Maine's coastal sand dunes, reduce our dry beaches by 42%, and devastate saltmarshes. All three of these ecosystems provide invaluable ecosystem services and economic benefits to our communities. As a kid, I remember experiencing the beauty of sand dunes and saltmarshes fondly.

Economic consequences will be staggering. 3.9-feet of sea level rise is estimated to cause over \$671 million in cumulative building losses and \$665 million in gross domestic losses in Maine. Economists hired by the Maine Climate Council predict that by 2050, Maine's coastline will sustain damages of up to \$17.5 billion if we do not adapt now. We cannot afford to "punt" on this. Every day spent not addressing climate change is a day wasted.

We can't wait. LD 1572 will enable us to make our communities resilient now before the worst impacts of sea level rise affect our coast. I have complete faith in the people of Maine to work tirelessly to protect our coastlines from the impact of climate change. Now it's time for the Committee to give me faith in its ability to address problems affecting Maine communities.

Sincerely,
John R. Burns