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Testimony of Representative Morgan Rielly in support of

LD 1429, “An Act To Implement the Most Time-sensitive Recommendations of the Maine Climate Council”

Before the Joint Standing Committee on Environment and Natural Resources

Good morning Senator Brenner, Representative Tucker, and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Environment and Natural Resources. I am Morgan Rielly, and I represent House District 34, which includes part of Westbrook. I am here today in support of **LD 1429, An Act To Implement the Most Time-sensitive Recommendations of the Maine Climate Council.**

The Maine Climate Council’s Four-Year Plan for Climate Action provides us with an extensive list of recommendations to address our urgent climate crisis. **LD 1429** offers an opportunity to implement the recommendations that are most time-sensitive in an effort to reduce the anticipated damage that will come with increasing temperatures, changing ecosystems and continued depletion of our natural resources. My testimony will focus on **LD 1429’s** impact on supporting local farms and providing nutritious food to school children, conservation of our land and waterways, sequestering carbon, and investments in the University of Maine System to help with research and innovation.

I decided to cosponsor this legislation for many reasons. Perhaps the most important is the effort to increase local food in our school systems. This not only benefits our kids and their families, but local farms as well, all while eliminating emissions associated with food distribution. Supporting our climate goals is tied into supporting our local and small family-operated farms along with making sure our children have access to nutritious food.

LD 1429 will make major strides in sequestering carbon here in the state. From developing an incentive-based forest carbon program to having the state conduct an inventory of the capacity of

our land, coastal, and marine ecosystems, this bill will help us meet our climate goals and put us on a path to achieving carbon neutrality here in Maine.

Further funding for the Land for Maine's Future Board will help conserve our land and waterways by working with the public and private sectors. This bill will include conserving habitats for deer wintering areas, outdoor recreation areas, working farmland preservation, and working waterfront preservation. In my hometown of Westbrook, we have worked closely with state and federal regulators as well as recreational groups and local businesses to conserve and improve the Presumpscot River resources by installing fish ladders.

LD 1429 will also help spur innovation by establishing the University of Maine System as the coordinating hub for developing new technologies. This will support a wide variety of industries here in the state as they transition and adapt to a new economy that will define the remainder of this century. Further investments into the University of Maine System will attract talented young minds to our state with scientific and engineering backgrounds.

This landmark bill helps ensure that Maine takes actionable steps towards addressing climate change, beginning with those that are most time-sensitive and impactful.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration.