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February 24, 2022

Re: *Friends of Casco Bay testimony in support of LD 1616*

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

Friends of Casco Bay submits this testimony in support of LD 1616, *An Act To Enhance the Ability of Municipalities to Address Climate Change Impacts by Protecting and Restoring Threatened Natural Resources*.

For over 30 years, Friends of Casco Bay has monitored Casco Bay and advocated to improve and protect its health. We recognize climate change as the biggest threat to the continued vitality of our coastal and marine resources. We further recognize that how we prepare for coastal resilience is complicated by the fact that so much of our coast is in private ownership.

LD 1616 expands existing law so municipalities may appropriate public funds to repair private roads, ways or bridges to protect and restore coastal bluffs or protected natural resources including coastal sand dune systems, coastal wetlands, significant wildlife habitat, fragile mountain areas, freshwater wetlands, community public water system primary protection areas, great ponds or rivers, streams or brooks. Current law only allows municipalities to appropriate public funds to repair private roads, ways or bridges to prevent storm water runoff pollution from reaching a great pond, for purposes of protecting or restoring the great pond.

LD 1616's expansion of current law may help municipalities implement climate resilience plans and protect natural resources for the greater good. It does not mandate expenditures of public funds for private benefits, and it includes threshold conditions that must be met.

For these reasons, we support LD 1616. Thank you for considering our testimony.

Respectfully submitted,

Ivy L. Frignoca, Casco Baykeeper
Friends of Casco Bay