



STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC
AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



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**Testimony of Commissioner Heather Johnson
In Support of LD 2270**

An Act to Create the Lincoln Mill Facilities District

Good Afternoon, Senator Lawrence, Representative Zeigler, and distinguished members of the Committee.

I am pleased to share this testimony in support of LD 2270, and to share some of the reasons why this is an important bill for continued economic development in Lincoln.

You will hear from folks who have been working with the Town of Lincoln since 2017 to acquire, remediate, and redevelop the former mill site known as the Lincoln Pulp & Tissue mill. They have now identified a federal funding source through USDA that could provide critical financing for a new wastewater treatment facility to serve a new business on the mill campus.

The legislative charter proposed in this bill will create a new Lincoln Mill Facilities District, which can engage in the design, permitting and construction of infrastructure facilities and services to serve businesses committed to the redeveloped mill campus. This upgraded infrastructure will help attract new business and support continued economic growth in Lincoln and surrounding areas.

We see in communities across our state that when capital investment is made, additional investments flow from that. From restaurants to new housing to small businesses starting up, anchor investments help to drive growth. One of the important responsibilities of our department is to support communities as they take initiative toward revitalization. This bill is a demonstration of that initiative, and we believe the Facilities District can be a catalyst for Lincoln and surrounding communities.

I would also like to note for the Committee's awareness that it is our understanding that the Town and its consultants have worked with the management and advisors of the four incumbent utilities to scope the geography and jurisdiction of the Facilities District to avoid conflicts.

Thank you for the opportunity to share this testimony. We will have a representative available for your work session and are happy to share additional information at the request of the committee.