

132nd Maine Legislature's Committee on Housing & Economic Development

LD 876: An Act to Support Rural Resilience and Emergency Response Through the Maine Service Fellows Program

Testimony in Support of LD 876

Chair Curry, Chair Gere, and esteemed members of the Joint Committee on Housing and Economic Development. My name is Pamela Proulx-Curry, I am Chair-elect of the Governor's Commission on Community Service and Volunteerism and I live in Old Town. I am submitting written testimony today in support of LD 876.

From securing \$300,000 in resilience grants for Oxford County to improving energy efficiency in homes in Dover Foxcroft and on the Passamaquoddy Pleasant Point Reservation to initiating climate change resiliency projects in Aroostook, Piscataquis, Hancock, and Washington Counties, the Maine Service Fellows program has already demonstrated its effectiveness and value to the State of Maine and to rural communities in particular.

Maine Service Fellows bring expertise and energy to often understaffed and under resourced rural communities and organizations. In the face of increasing threats from global climate change and increasing workforce and budgetary challenges, the Maine Service Fellows program offers increasingly vital support to communities in developing effective responses to meet those challenges.

Patterned after national AmeriCorps programs, a proven model for addressing community need, the Maine Service Fellows Program has the added advantage of being focused very specifically on the particular needs of Maine's rural communities.

The need is real. The program works and is cost effective. I urge the committee to support this bill. Thank you.