



Committee on Housing  
% Legislative Information Office  
100 State House Station  
Augusta, ME 04333

May 8, 2023

**RE: LD 1787, Resolve, Directing the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry to Convene a Stakeholder Group Tasked with a Comprehensive Overhaul and Modernization of the State Subdivision Statutes**

Dear Senator Pierce, Representative Gere, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of LD 1787, “Resolve, Directing the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry to Convene a Stakeholder Group Tasked with a Comprehensive Overhaul and Modernization of the State Subdivision Statutes”, on behalf of Maine Audubon and our 30,000 members, supporters, and volunteers. Since 1843, Maine Audubon has worked to conserve Maine’s wildlife and wildlife habitat by engaging people in education, conservation, and action. The oldest and largest Maine-based conservation organization, Maine Audubon has eight public centers and sanctuaries across the state, seven chapters, and connects with more than 250,000 people annually.

Maine Audubon recognizes the incredible importance of land use law for creating thriving communities, and for conserving valuable habitats and natural resources. We also recognize the importance of re-evaluating existing statutes when they no longer adequately address the issues for which they were developed.

Maine Audubon participated in a policy group discussion that convened in response to the passage of LD 2003 by the 130<sup>th</sup> Legislature to review current subdivision law, the housing crunch, and the needs of today’s municipalities. As a group, we determined there were lots of places where existing subdivision law could be changed and improved to more closely align with the goals of LD 2003, encourage more multi-purpose town centers and residential areas, allow higher density housing in growth areas, and also better protect the precious waters, farms, forests, wildlife, and habitat that support all life and contribute to local economies in Maine. However, the group also agreed there was simply not enough time to do a thorough and meaningful review of all the issues in the few months we had last fall.

By convening a stakeholder group with various interests and perspectives to evaluate and modernize the state subdivision statutes, such as proposed in LD 1787, Maine can provide better

support for municipalities, landowners, and homeowners in their quest for a brighter future. We stand ready to offer our expertise to the group once convened.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Eliza Donoghue".

Eliza Donoghue, Esq.  
Director of Advocacy