

To: The Joint Standing Committee on Marine Resources
From: Monique Coombs
Date: April 24th, 2025

Re: LD 1625: An Act Regarding the Preservation of Working Waterfronts



Dear Honorable Senator Tepler, Representative Hepler, and distinguished members of the Joint Committee on Marine Resources:

On behalf of the Maine Coast Fishermen's Association (MCFA), I am writing to express strong support for the proposed legislation aimed at protecting and preserving Maine's working waterfronts, expanding community conservation efforts, and ensuring public access to our natural and economic coastal resources.

Commercial fishing is more than an industry in Maine; it is a way of life, an economic engine, and a vital part of our heritage. Yet, rising property values, rapid development, and limited public investment in access increasingly threaten the future of working waterfronts. This bill acknowledges those challenges and provides a meaningful, structured response.

The establishment of the Maine Working Waterfront Preservation Fund and the prioritization of projects that maintain access for commercial fisheries businesses are essential steps toward long-term sustainability and equity. By creating mechanisms to preserve access, offer matching grants, and support stewardship and planning, this bill ensures that working waterfronts remain active and available to those who depend on them to feed their families and communities.

We also commend the emphasis LD 1625 places on community-level conservation projects, particularly those that promote inclusive public access, protect ecological resources, and support local economies. MCFA urges lawmakers to advance this critical legislation, which reflects Maine's deep-rooted commitment to stewardship, resilience, and opportunity for all who call the coast home. Thank you for your time and attention to this issue.

Sincerely,

Monique Coombs

Director of Community Programs

Maine Coast Fishermen's Association