



COCOMAINE

Congolese Community of Maine

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 30, 2023

Mardochee Mbongi, President.

mardochee.mbongi@cocomaine.org

COCOMAINE'S STATEMENT OF SUPPORT.

Testimony in Support of LD 2167 - for the Creation of Office of New Americans (**ONA**)

Dear Committee Members,

I am writing to express my strong support for LD 2167, which proposes the creation of the Office of New Americans in the State of Maine. As the President of COCOMAINE, an organization committed to [brief description of your organization's mission and activities], I believe that this initiative is crucial for fostering a more inclusive and welcoming environment for newcomers to our state.

Maine has a rich history of cultural diversity and has benefited significantly from the contributions of immigrants and refugees who have chosen to make our state their home. The establishment of the Office of New Americans would signify our commitment to recognizing and celebrating this diversity, while also addressing the unique challenges that immigrants and refugees may face during their integration into our communities.

Here are a few reasons why I believe LD 2167 is essential for the well-being and prosperity of our state:

Enhanced Support Services: The Office of New Americans would play a pivotal role in coordinating and providing support services to help newcomers navigate various aspects of life in Maine, including education, employment, healthcare, and social integration.

175 Lancaster Street, Suite 216B Portland, ME 04101 P.O Box 1658 Portland, ME 04104 Office line: 207-747-4036

Email: admin@cocomaine.org Website: <http://www.cocomaine.org> Office Hours: Monday - Friday 9:00 am – 4:30 pm

Cultural Exchange and Understanding: By promoting cultural exchange programs and community events, the Office of New Americans can help foster a deeper understanding and appreciation of the diverse cultures that enrich our state. This, in turn, contributes to a more cohesive and harmonious society.

Economic Growth: Immigrants and refugees bring valuable skills, talents, and entrepreneurship to our communities. The Office of New Americans can actively engage in initiatives to connect newcomers with employment opportunities, fostering economic growth for both individuals and the state as a whole.

Streamlined Integration Processes: The creation of a centralized office would streamline the integration processes for new Americans, making it easier for them to access essential resources, information, and services, thereby expediting their integration into Maine communities.

I urge the committee to consider the long-term benefits that LD 2167 could bring to the State of Maine. By investing in the successful integration of immigrants and refugees, we not only honor our state's heritage as a welcoming place for all but also contribute to a stronger, more vibrant future for Maine.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I am available to provide any additional information or answer questions you may have.

Sincerely,

Mardochée MBONGI

President

Private 980-250-4395