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STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF
ECONOMIC
AND COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT



MICHAEL A.
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COMMISSIONER

Testimony of Maureen Terry
Neither For Nor Against
LD 2228 An Act to Eliminate Inactive Boards and Commissions

Senator Baldacci, Representative Salisbury, and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on State and Local Government:

My name is Maureen Terry, I am the legislative liaison for the Department of Economic and Community Development, and I am submitting testimony asking the committee to exempt the Citizen Trade Policy Commission and the Maine–Island of Ireland Trade Commission from LD 2228, *An Act to Eliminate Inactive Boards and Commissions*.

First, I want to acknowledge and appreciate the Committee’s work to review the status of boards and commissions and ensure that state government remains efficient and transparent. Regular review of these bodies is an important responsibility of the Legislature.

However, in the case of the Citizen Trade Policy Commission and the Maine–Island of Ireland Trade Commission, their recent inactivity does not reflect a lack of value or relevance but rather circumstances that have limited their ability to operate during the most recent reporting period.

The Citizen Trade Policy Commission plays an important role in helping Maine monitor and respond to international trade policies that affect our state’s economy. Maine is a highly trade-dependent state, with many of our key industries—including manufacturing, forest products, agriculture, and emerging technology sectors—relying on access to international markets. A body dedicated to reviewing trade policy and providing guidance to policymakers helps ensure that Maine’s interests are represented and that the state remains informed about evolving global economic conditions.

The commission’s statutory structure, however, has not kept pace with current economic realities and trade dynamics. Recognizing this, the Maine International Trade Center, which oversees the commission’s work, has been working with



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Representative Rielly of Westbrook to develop updated statutory language that would modernize the commission's structure and responsibilities. A bill containing those updates was recently submitted but was not accepted by Legislative Council because of second-session filing limitations. Additionally, Representative Rielly was only appointed to the commission in 2025, which has not provided sufficient time for the commission to undertake the work necessary to review and update its statutory framework. Eliminating the commission at this time would remove an important venue for addressing emerging international trade issues just as efforts are underway to modernize and strengthen its mission.

Similarly, the Maine–Island of Ireland Trade Commission was established to strengthen economic and cultural ties between Maine and Ireland—relationships that have historically been important to the state. While the commission has not yet had the opportunity to fully begin its work, the Governor is currently in the process of reviewing and recommending appointments to the commission. Once those appointments are finalized, the commission will be positioned to begin its work building stronger trade, investment, and economic partnerships.

Both commissions serve important strategic purposes related to Maine's economic engagement with international partners. Their recent inactivity reflects transitional circumstances rather than a lack of need or relevance.

For these reasons, I respectfully encourage the Committee to exempt the Citizen Trade Policy Commission and the Maine–Island of Ireland Trade Commission from the provisions of this bill, allowing them the time necessary to update their statutory frameworks, finalize appointments, and begin fulfilling their intended missions.

Thank you for your consideration and for your continued work on behalf of the people of Maine. I would be happy to provide additional information if that would be helpful to the Committee.



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