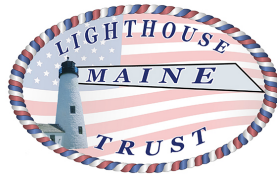


*Maine Lighthouse Trust
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February 16, 2021

Dear Senator Diamond, Representative Martin, and Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Transportation,

I am Barbara Fortier, native Mainer, life-long resident of Biddeford, and Secretary on the Board of the Maine Lighthouse Trust.

I ask that you please pass the act to create the Maine Lighthouse Trust Registration Plate, LD 266.

As you know, lighthouses have played a vital role in our state's maritime history since construction began on Maine's first at Portland Head in 1787. Today, more than 230 years later, lighthouses continue to aid in safe navigation of our coastal waters, as well as inspire tourism and fascination with our state's history and the lighthouse-keeper heritage of lore. Since lighthouses in our country have all now been automated, many of their associated residences and outbuildings have fallen into disrepair, and upkeep has mainly fallen into hands of concerned citizens and pro-active non-profit groups. While this maintenance involves an inordinate number of human work hours and a plethora of resources, funding is a primary issue.

The sales of the Maine Lighthouse Trust registration plate will help to raise necessary funding for this endeavor and will serve as a billboard and constant reminder of our coastal heritage all along Maine highways and roads. Since tourism plays a large role in Maine's economy, the preservation of our state's lighthouses will only help to support our economic future.

As a beneficiary from the sale of these plates, the Maine Lighthouse Trust will be charged with dispersing funds to various groups in all of Maine's lighthouse communities to help preserve and protect the extensive history that is on display with the 60+ lighthouses from Kittery to Eastport and Lubec and to help improve public access to these iconic structures. Having received support for this specialty plate during the pre-sale of more than 2000 plates by citizens representing 375 of the 488 incorporated municipalities from York to Aroostook County, we have demonstrated the appeal of this iconic lighthouse plate in all corners of Maine.

I am extremely appreciative of your support for these plates and look forward to seeing these plates on vehicles throughout our state. Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

Barbara Fortier
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Biddeford, ME 04005