

**TESTIMONY OF SUSANNA RICHER -- IN SUPPORT OF
L.D. 115 " An Act to Assess Impact Fees on Megayachts "
Committee On Transportation
April 4, 2025**

Senator Nangle, Representative Crafts, and distinguished members of the Committee:

Thank you for considering my testimony in strong support of LD 115. Last session, this bill, in its current form, passed both the House and Senate with bipartisan support only to become one of the many bills subject to a last-minute pocket veto by the governor. As a result, I am thankful that *An Act to Assess Impact Fees on Megayachts* has a second chance for consideration and hope this time around it will be signed into law.

According to [a 2023 article published in the Guardian](#), "owning a megayacht is the most polluting activity a single person can possibly engage in." It's our responsibility as Maine citizens and stewards to prevent destruction of our natural resources and to hold polluters accountable.

The fees generated by this proposal support harbor infrastructure, sea level rise mitigation infrastructure, and public transit infrastructure, including ferries and land-based public transportation. All positive and needed investments,

There is no question that someone who owns a megayacht can easily pay an impact fee to offset the environmental and ecological damage that the vessel produces while in port. Since we already require land-based visitors to pay lodging fees, it seems unlikely that charging a reasonable impact fee to megayacht owners would discourage visits.

However, I question whether the proposed fees are high enough? Would a higher fee have a proportionally greater corrective effect? Should we charge more?

Will this bill solve all our environmental and societal growing pains? Of course not. But it's a great idea and an easy step in the right direction that supports accountability and investment in our natural resources while simultaneously providing a vehicle to track the size, number and length of stay of megayachts that visit our ports.

As someone who lives with a former commercial fisherman, I know firsthand the negative effect that climate change, pollution, gentrification and tourism have on our bays and working waterfronts. It is almost impossible for fishermen and Industries that rely on them to survive. Our working waterfronts are an important part of our heritage and industry, and are a big reason that visitors are drawn to Maine. They must be preserved.

Furthermore, as Maine gains popularity as a destination, we have a responsibility to actively protect the long-term sustainability of the shared natural resources that make Maine a special and unique place to live and visit. This bill takes a small step towards that preservation goal. Please vote "ought to pass" on LD 115.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Susanna Richer, Portland ME