



SIERRA CLUB

MAINE CHAPTER

PO Box 3760
Portland, Maine 04104
Phone: (207) 761-5616
www.sierraclub.org/maine

To: Joint Standing Committee on Transportation
From: David von Seggern, Sierra Club Maine
Date: April 7, 2025
Re: Testimony in support of LD 115, *An Act to Access Impact Fees on Megayachts*

Senator Nangle, Representative Crafts, and members of the Joint Transportation Committee:

I am David von Seggern of Westbrook, Maine and am testifying in regard to LD 115, “An Act to Assess Impact Fees on Megayachts” on behalf of the Sierra Club of Maine, representing over 22,000 supporters and members statewide. I am co-lead of their Clean Energy Team. Founded in 1892, Sierra Club is one of our nation’s oldest and largest environmental organizations. We support this bill as a means to further one of our main goals of lessening the impacts of climate change.

LD 115 seeks to impose additional fees on large yachts which dock at Maine’s ports. We support the imposition of these fees on yachts longer than 150 feet in order to target the significant marine emitters of pollutants to the air and water. This bears comparison with the schedule of fees on commercial and motor-home vehicles in our state—larger vehicles pay more.¹

It is appropriate that megayachts be subject to additional fees because they are simply outsized when considering the amount of pollutants emitted per capita onboard these vessels. It is also appropriate from the perspective that most of the climate-change-induced damage to Maine infrastructure is happening at the coastline where these outsized vessels are sailing and harboring. There is a significant difference between large cargo ships which transport loads commensurate with their size and megayachts which transport only a few individuals.

We are aware that the Maine Department of Environmental Protection opposes this bill because it places additional burdens on their staff to assess, collect, manage, and expend the fees proposed in LD 115. We therefore suggest that the committee consider amending the proposed legislation to simplify the fee structure. It would make sense to

¹ Maine Bureau of Motor Vehicles, <https://www.maine.gov/sos/bmv/registration/regfees.html>

direct the fees toward those municipalities which host the megayachts because these entities are most impacted and would have most to gain by directing the fee income toward projects that will neutralize the overall impact of megayachts on air and water quality in harbor areas.

Sincerely,

David von Seggern
Sierra Club Maine Chapter