

**Testimony before the Committee on Housing and Economic Development
in support of LD 1: An Act to Increase Storm Preparedness for Maine’s Communities, Homes and
Infrastructure**

February 27, 2025

Senator Curry, Representative Gere and members of the Committee, my name is Sean Mahoney, and I am the Vice President and senior counsel of the Conservation Law Foundation (CLF). I appreciate this opportunity to testify in support of LD 1, An Act to Increase Storm Preparedness for Maine’s Communities, Homes and Infrastructure.

CLF, founded in 1966, is a public interest advocacy group that works to solve the environmental and energy challenges threatening the people, natural resources and communities in Maine and across New England. In Maine for almost four decades, CLF is a member-supported organization that works to ensure that laws and policies are developed, implemented and enforced that protect, restore and benefit our communities and natural resources; are good for Maine’s economy and environment; and equitably address the climate crisis.

CLF supports LD 1 because it is a step towards providing Maine communities with the tools and resources to prepare for and respond to the increasing severity of storms that are a direct result of climate change. Too many of our communities have had to witness and suffer through severe storms over the past decade, most recently the winter storms of December 2023 and January 2024, which alone caused over \$90 million in damage to public infrastructure, and many millions more to private homes and businesses.¹ In the face of these unprecedented weather events, communities must be equipped with the tools to prepare and adapt.

LD 1 supports the important goal of creating more climate-resilient communities and is a very good start to the massive amount of work needed to meet that goal. Ultimately, a larger, longer-term fund is going to be necessary to pay for that work beyond the two years of funding that LD 1 would provide. Legislation to create such a fund by holding those responsible for the carbon pollution that lies at the heart of climate change will be presented to the Legislature later this session. But that in no way replaces the need for LD 1 to begin the work of preparing for the next flood, the next southeaster, the next drought, the next windstorm or the next storm surge.

We thank Governor Mills and the bipartisan leaders and sponsors of this important legislation and urge you to vote ought to pass. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of LD 1.

¹ “Maine Won’t Wait: A Four-Year Plan for Climate Change,” Maine Climate Council, Nov. 2024 at 2, https://www.maine.gov/climateplan/sites/maine.gov.climateplan/files/2024-11/MWW_2024_Book_112124.pdf.