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25 April 2019

Joint Committee on Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry
100 State House Station
Cross Building, Room 214
Augusta, ME 04333

Re: AOPA Testimony Supporting LD 1574, Seaplane Access to Katahdin Lake.

Dear Chairmen Senator Dill, Representative Hickman, and esteemed members of the Conservation Committee,

The Aircraft Owners & Pilots Association (AOPA) is the world's largest aviation organization representing the general aviation interests of nearly 330,000 members across the country, including 1,579 in the State of Maine. On behalf of these members, **AOPA supports LD 1574, an act to maintain seaplane access to Katahdin Lake.**

Contrary to the claims of some, seaplanes are regularly cited with contributing to the health of the environment and specifically those waterways they frequent. Seaplanes offer minimally intrusive means of accessing a waterway, with a minimal wake that leaves only ripples when they land and takeoff. Since they are a means of access, once visitors have landed the engine is shutdown and they go off to enjoy other forms of recreation rather than continuously operate their motors for propulsion such as a motorboat. Across the state of Maine, seaplanes are recognized as useful tools in conducting surveys of wilderness conditions, water quality analysis and provide emergency assistance and evacuation of injured or sick patrons as well as search and rescue.

When the Gardner Land Company (GLC) sold the land encompassing Katahdin Lake in 2005 the only stipulation placed on the sale by the Garner family, which was accepted by the State of Maine under then Governor John Baldacci, was for seaplane access to remain in perpetuity. Thomas Gardner, President of GLC has provided evidence for this through the 'sale terms and management plan' and the submission of his own testimony. Therefore LD 1574 is as much about our great state upholding one of Maine's most coveted ideals—upholding a commitment and keeping its word—as it is about allowing access to an important transportation industry.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this important matter. AOPA is committed to ensuring the safety, future viability, and development of general aviation as an integral part of a national transportation system. We welcome any opportunity to serve this Committee as a resource on general aviation and airports. For questions, please contact me, AOPA's Eastern Regional Manager and Brewer, Maine resident, Sean Collins at sean.collins@aopa.org or by phone at (301) 695-2090.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Collins', is centered within a light gray rectangular box.

Sean M. Collins, AOPA
Eastern Regional Manager