



Janet T. Mills
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MAINE
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AUGUSTA, MAINE
04333-0001

June 20, 2025

The 132nd Legislature of the State of Maine
State House
Augusta, Maine

Dear Honorable Members of the 132nd Legislature:

By the Authority conferred by Article IV, Part Third, Section 2 of the Constitution of the State of Maine, I am hereby vetoing LD 1731, *An Act to Increase the Influence of the Maine State Ferry Advisory Board on the Funding and Operations of the Maine State Ferry Service*.

This session, the Legislature considered roughly ten bills related to the Maine State Ferry Service (MSFS). The Department of Transportation (MaineDOT) worked in good faith with bill sponsors on many of them to develop compromise language that could appropriately address constituent concerns while maintaining the State's ability to operate a reliable, affordable, and safe ferry service.

LD 1731 attempts to shift the Advisory Board's role from advisory to quasi-managerial. MaineDOT already consults the Advisory Board on budgets, schedules, staffing and vessel operations, providing detailed reports and responding to member questions and concerns at their bimonthly meetings. The Department values this feedback and uses it to inform decisions. However, this bill mandates "consultation" on nearly every operational decision, implicitly seeking to grant the Advisory Board a level of oversight and direction that conflicts with its intended role and undermines the Department's legal responsibility to manage and operate the service.

The State of Maine provides more than \$8 million in annual subsidy to operate the MSFS and has provided over \$12 million in annual capital funding for the six islands served. That level of public investment underscores the State's commitment to supporting these communities. With such a significant taxpayer contribution, the Department must retain operational control to ensure efficient use of funds and consistent service delivery.

For these reasons, I cannot support LD 1731. It is unnecessary legislation that could complicate management of a critical and complex service. I respectfully urge the Legislature to sustain this veto.

Sincerely,



Janet T. Mills
Governor



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