6 March 2018

The 128th Legislature of the State of Maine
State House
Augusta, ME

Dear Honorable Members of the 128th Legislature:

Under the authority vested in me by Article IV, Part Third, Section 2 of the Constitution of the State of Maine, I am hereby vetoing LD 1400, “An Act To Create the Bar Harbor Port Authority.”

Creating a port authority for Bar Harbor is an unnecessary municipal bureaucracy whose purpose is to deflect accountability from the town. Bar Harbor is aware they cannot legally prohibit cruise ships from visiting, and very recently the citizens defeated a proposed moratorium on cruise ships. The fact of the matter is hundreds of cruise ships have visited Bar Harbor and over one hundred are anticipated to come in this year. Maine has several coastal towns, including Bar Harbor, where cruise ship traffic is handled by the municipalities and has been for years. The municipalities can maintain and expand the necessary infrastructure to land any cruise ship just as, if not more, effectively than a local port authority.

The unintended consequences of creating local authorities despite the existence of centralized, structured, and regulated authorities are playing out today. The Legislature should be more interested in utilizing our existing authorities and state operated agencies than offering autonomy to anyone seeking it, which may create serious safety concerns.

For these reasons, I return LD 1400 unsigned and vetoed. I strongly urge the Legislature to sustain it.

Sincerely,

Paul R. LePage
Governor