



Irving Woodlands Testimony in Opposition of LD 125

March 2, 2021

Senator Dill, Representative O'Neil, and esteemed members of the ACF committee. My name is Anthony Hourihan and I represent Irving Woodlands, and I am asking you to vote ought not to pass on LD 125. A ban on approved herbicide use in Maine will effectively result in a ban on tree planting in the State. While the world is looking to plant more tree in the fight against climate change, this bill will result in less trees being planted in the state. Removing appropriate, regulated and approved tools from professional foresters is a vote against good forest management.

The herbicides used in forestry are all approved by Federal and State regulators including the EPA, and glyphosate is licensed globally for use directly on over 100 food crops. These are applied using State of the art technologies on the helicopter using precision GPS and boom and nozzle controls. The use of this technology means lower volume. Irving Woodlands has planted more than 73 million trees in the State, and we plant 3 million trees per year. Aerial herbicide is an important tool to ensure seedlings aren't over topped with raspberries and other vegetation that will choke out the light and nutrients the seedlings need to survive. If left untreated 75% of the trees planted will die.

The areas of the forest we are replanting are growing 4 times the volume of wood versus those areas left to naturally regenerate, and these fast-growing forests sequester 4 times the CO₂ as a natural regenerating forest. There is great interest around the planet on how we can better utilize forests and good forest management to store more carbon as we transition off fossil fuels, and deal with a changing climate. The Biden administration refers to this in the American Innovation Effort on Net Zero Building Construction, as well when nominee for EPA Administrator Regan was answering Senate questions, he stated "We're going to work together with farmers and foresters to make sure that they have the tools and information that they need to continue to be stewards of the land as we tackle climate and other environmental issues." Yet here we are today as foresters and landowners fighting to keep a very important tool for our industry, that will play a role in dealing with increasing invasive species, and that can play a large role in helping Maine lead the way in climate change!

The banning of aerial herbicide could lead to the elimination of the planting of our 3 million trees annually in Maine. This means an immediate reduction in the amount of softwood we can sustainably cut off our lands, which results in immediate job losses for 16 to 20 people. These are hardworking loggers, truckers, and foresters that because of no fault of their own, just poor policy, will lose their jobs! The local economy in Aroostook County stands to lose annual spending of more than \$1.4 million when these folks are no longer buying parts and fuel, and we no longer have tree planting crews in the area for the summer.

The elimination of planting on Irving lands means there is 8 million tons of CO₂ equivalent that will not be sequestered on our lands in the next 40 years, this is the equivalent of leaving 40,000 cars on the road for the next 40 years. This is a tool we need as land managers.

I urge you to rely on Federally approved science and facts and continue to support Maine's tree planting and carbon reduction initiative.

Thank You

Anthony Hourihan