



Testimony of

**DANA A. DORAN
Executive Director**

Professional Logging Contractors of the Northeast

**Before the Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs to
LD 209, An Act to Make Supplemental Appropriations and Allocations from the
General Fund and Other Funds for the Expenditures of State Government and to
Change Certain Provisions of the Law Necessary to the Proper Operations of State
Government for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2025**

Tuesday, January 21, 2025

Senator Rotundo, Representative Gattine, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs, my name is Dana Doran, and I am the Executive Director of the Professional Logging Contractors of the Northeast (PLC). The PLC is a regional non-profit organization that represents logging and associated trucking contractors throughout the Northeast, predominately in the state of Maine.

As background, the PLC was created in 1995 to give logging and associated trucking contractors a voice in a rapidly changing forest products industry. As of 2021, logging and trucking contractors in Maine employed over 3,000 people directly and were indirectly responsible for the creation of an additional 2,500 jobs. This employment and the investments that contractors make contributed \$582 million to the state's economy. Our membership, which includes over 200 contractor members in the state of Maine and an additional 125 associate members, is responsible for more than 80% of Maine's annual timber harvest.

Thank you for providing me the opportunity to testify on behalf of our membership neither for, nor against to LD 209, "An Act to Make Supplemental Appropriations and Allocations from the General Fund and Other Funds for the Expenditures of State Government and to Change Certain Provisions of the Law Necessary to the Proper Operations of State Government for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2025". Our comments will be directed towards Part U of the Governor's proposed supplemental budget.

The PLC appreciates the Governor and the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry dedicating resources to address early intervention and management of the Spruce Budworm outbreak in Aroostook County. This is important in terms of mitigating the spread and impact of this invasive species on the spruce population. However, as one important stakeholder in the forest supply chain we are unclear as to where this pathway and the estimate for funding came from. As the stakeholder that will ultimately harvest both healthy and impacted spruce populations, we would appreciate an opportunity to provide input on the

spruce budworm outbreak and process by which the Department will spend the money appropriated in this bill. The logging community should be considered stakeholders in planning and need assessment as this moves forward.

There are still a few questions that still need to be answered regarding the funding distribution such as, will any of these funds be for contractors to offset costs they will need to absorb in salvage harvesting dead or nearly dead wood? Second, how will these funds be distributed, through competitive grants? Finally, what accountability measures are in place? We are not trying to be critical, but the language in Part U is vague to how the money will be allocated.

The Spruce Budworm outbreak should be taken very seriously, and we are not downplaying it by any means, but the logging community needs to be included in the discussion and the solution. The PLC has advocated for years to the MFS to find an opportunity to help logging contractors with equipment costs to no avail. Inflation and the cost of everything related to logging has increased by over 40%, and the direction that contractors are headed in is simply unsustainable. It is extremely frustrating to have our needs and issues pushed to the side, while immediate assistance for other stakeholders has not only been found but is being pushed forward in short order.

Again, the PLC agrees that Part U of LD 209 is important to the protecting the forests in Aroostook County, but there should be accountability of where the money is going, and loggers should be part of the conversation.

Thank you for your consideration of our opinion and I urge you to keep the logging community in mind when making decisions. Thanks and I would be happy to answer any questions you might have.