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**Before the Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology in Support of LD 1606 – An Act
to Finance Clean Energy and Infrastructure in Maine**

Thursday, April 27, 2023

Senator Lawrence, Representative Zeigler and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology, my name is Dana Doran, and I am the Executive Director of the Professional Logging Contractors of Maine. The Professional Logging Contractors of Maine (PLC) is a trade association located in Augusta that represents logging and associated trucking contractors throughout the state of Maine. The PLC was formed in 1995 to give independent contractors a voice in a rapidly changing forest 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 200 contractor members and an additional 120 associate members, employs more than 75% of the individuals who work in this industry and is also responsible for 80% of Maine's annual timber harvest.

Thank you for providing me the opportunity to testify on behalf of our membership in conditional support of LD 1606 – An Act to Finance Clean Energy and Infrastructure in Maine. In 2021, we supported Representative Zeigler's bill, LD 1659 – An Act to Create the Maine Clean Energy and Sustainability Accelerator, which was the authorizing legislation that this bill seeks to amend. Our testimony today endorses Section 1 of the bill, but requests that Section 2 be amended to include all forms of renewable energy which are already recognized in 35-A MRS §10129, Subsection 1.I.

The Maine Clean Energy and Sustainability Accelerator program was created in the 130th Legislature to complement the Establishment of Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy Programs. The Maine Clean Energy and Sustainability Accelerator Program is a renewable energy agnostic and did not pick winners and losers. We believe that if this legislation will amend the program, it should be consistent with current law and also not pick winners and losers.

We would also like to bring to this committee's attention that in 2019, Governor Mills signed into law, LD 375, An Act to Promote the Forest Products Industry in School Construction and Renovation Involving Heating Systems. Public Law, Chapter 53 – 2019, which I have attached to my testimony, states specifically that in approving school construction or renovation projects, school boards must consider heating systems that use renewable, locally sourced wood-based fuels. If the bill before you today were to move forward as written, it would be counter to current law. To ensure this doesn't occur, we would request that Section 2 be amended to allow for all renewable energy sources already prescribed in 35-A MRS §10129, Subsection 1.I.

Thank you for considering my testimony and the changes that we have requested, and I would be happy to answer any questions you might have.

STATE OF MAINE

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD

TWO THOUSAND NINETEEN

H.P. 284 - L.D. 375

An Act To Promote the Forest Products Industry in School Construction and Renovation Involving Heating Systems**Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:****Sec. 1. 20-A MRSA §15908-B is enacted to read:****§15908-B. Heating systems**

In approving school construction projects, the state board shall ensure that school administrative units have considered heating systems that use renewable, locally sourced wood-based fuels and that benefit the State's economy and reduce carbon dioxide emissions in all planning and design for new or substantially renovated schools or school buildings subject to state board approval.

As used in this section, "substantially renovated" has the same meaning as in section 15908-A, subsection 1.