

Anne Mitchell
Readfield
LD 928

To: Committee on Environment and Natural Resources

Re: LD 928 "Resolution, Proposing an Amendment to the Constitution of Maine to Establish a Right to a Clean and Healthy Environment."

Senator Brenner, Representative Gramlich, and honorable members of the Committee on Environment and Natural Resources. I appreciate this opportunity to present my comments in OPPOSITION to LD928.

This proposed amendment to our state Constitution is flawed from the get-go in its vague wording and lack of clarity. The use of terms like "clean and healthy" and "natural, cultural qualities" are highly subjective and left to individual interpretation. There is no legal clarity in these terms if such decisions are left to one individual, a judge who may have her or his own interpretation.

We Maine people treasure our beautiful environment. We have a long history of protecting our natural resources through regulatory agencies that oversee the use of our air, water, and land. Our state and municipal regulatory agencies are elected officials who represent all the people. If such decisions were left to one appointed judge, power is taken away from the Maine people.

This proposed amendment is designed specifically to bypass the usual process of creating and enacting environmental regulations, and that includes the work before this committee. Individuals and groups who don't want to go through the usual legal route to enact public policy will use this amendment to bypass the Legislature and thus take that power away from the Maine people.

With our strong, specific environmental regulations and representative agencies already in place, LD 928 is unneeded and would be a dangerous change to our constitution. I urge you to vote ought not to pass on LD 928. Thank you.

Anne Mitchell
Readfield, Maine