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Testimony of Shari Garland in support of LD 2087 - An Act to Protect Property Owners by Preventing the Use of Eminent Domains to Build Transmission Lines Under Northern Maine Renewable Energy Development Program.

Senator Lawrence, Representative Zeigler, and members of the Energy, Utility, and Technology Committee.

Thank you for providing me with this opportunity to SUPPORT LD 2087 - An Act to Protect Property Owners by Preventing the Use of Eminent Domains to Build Transmission Lines Under Northern Maine Renewable Energy Development Program.

I am writing today to voice my full support of LD 2087. As a full time REALTOR® for the past 20 years in this great state, I know why people grow their roots here and others can't wait to move here from all over and call Maine home. As a born and raised Mainer and avid outdoor enthusiast, I treasure the states beauty and landscape. When my husband (Retired Combat Veteran) and I were down with his military tour, we knew with no question we belonged back home in Maine.

As the proposed transmission line was previously mapped with LS Power, my property would have been greatly impacted. That being said, I don't believe any changes to the map justify this monstrosity of a line above ground. I understand, we need to address energy concerns, however there are many other states and many studies that confirm going underground is the way of the future. I also understand the cost is greater, but isn't this an investment in our future? Existing corridors at a minimum should be primarily utilized if possible. I strongly disagree with eminent domain being utilized for this project. If approved, the mental and financial impact this project will have on property owners and potential property owners is devastating! Hardworking Maine property owners should not have to live in fear of everything they have worked so hard for being ripped from them waiting for decisions to be made in Augusta that has devastating effects on them and their families!

The way this was previously handled and the stress it caused people affected for the last 6 months and is still causing many property owners is absolutely unnecessary. The way the affected property owners were notified and blind sided left them feeling helpless, scared and angry. I personally found out about my property being affected on Facebook. That is absolutely absurd!

After doing further research, I found the previously proposed line ran directly through our 126 acre parcel in Corinth cutting it in half. We currently have 3 other private rights of way through our property in addition to a fourth ROW for Versant Power that we were aware of when we purchased, but never imagined there could be more. We reside on this property and have plans to build a homestead with our son and his family. My husband and I have owned this property since 2011. As many others do, we fear our hopes, dreams and everything we have worked so hard for will be stolen from us. There is no amount of money that we would be willing to accept to run a 150 ft wide easement through our entire property cutting it in half. With setbacks from the transmission line of 300 ft, it would ultimately be approximately 750 ft of now unusable to us land that we still pay taxes on. The impact mentally and the devaluation it will have on our property long term is immense. Just the discussion of the proposed line will decrease landowners ability to sell for fair market value. My husband and I have worked tirelessly to develop many trails throughout our property along with fields that we maintain yearly for the mere enjoyment and peaceful tranquility that we deserve as well as a safe place for the wildlife that inhabit our land. We have many families that also call our land home and live on our property to

include; bear, deer, moose, turkeys, birds, beaver, hawks, owls, etc. We have a momma bear that dens here every year and currently has two small cubs. The previously proposed line would have gone right through her home. This property is all of our homes, our way of life, solitude, why we live here and what we enjoy.

The State should be required to be much more transparent about these matters than what previously transpired. This should have never been approved before maps were determined and additional studies conducted. I strongly disagree with this being approved and eminent domain being utilized. IF eminent domain needed to be used on a project that "benefits all" it certainly should be small areas that do not affect people's homes, farms and recreational areas. It absolutely should not be used for the majority of the project! There are other existing corridors that could be used or go underground!!

Thank you Senator Curry for drafting this bill and looking out for property owner rights in Maine. Please, please as elected officials, stand up for us landowners by supporting LD 2087. Please imagine if this was your family compound and life savings being ripped apart.

Thank you,
Shari Garland