



Testimony of the Town of Carrabassett Valley

In Opposition to LD 261

*An Act Regarding the Authority of Municipalities
to Regulate Timber Harvesting*

March 18, 2025

Senator Talbot Ross, Representative Pluecker, honorable members of the Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, my name is Garrett Corbin, and I am offering this testimony in conditional opposition to LD 261 in my capacity as the Town Manager of the Town of Carrabassett Valley.

When State government considers requiring all of its Municipal government partners to perform a new activity, there should be an evident basis for the mandate. The proponents' testimony is highly anecdotal and generally lacking in examples or data that would justify an action as drastic as forcing the wholesale re-adoption of lawfully adopted ordinances statewide. There are around 480 municipalities in Maine. How many of their ordinances have caused demonstrated issues?

The foundation of our Ordinance is sound. Voters in Carrabassett Valley adopted it at the annual Town Meeting in March of 1992 and our most recent communication with the Department about it in 2022 acknowledged compliance. At some point, longstanding municipal ordinances merit a presumption of lawful adoption.

Local forestry practices are closely scrutinized by our taxpayers, who are generally quite supportive. We take particular pride in the management of our public lot, which supports the development, maintenance, and bridge work in the Town's nordic skiing trail network, the largest in Maine. Achieving cooperation between locals of different perspectives is a delicate balance in our community, earned over years of collaboration. It should go without saying that these local democratic processes deserve respect if not deference.

Mindful of the stakeholder group's deliberations, I respectfully request the Committee adopt an amendment which modifies the arduous redundancy of this mandate. Removing the first two lines will make the mandate prospective only, not retroactive, and removing the third and fourth lines below would make it more practical to apply.



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Sec. 2. 12 MRSA §8869, sub-§8...

~~26 A municipal timber harvesting ordinance adopted on or after September 1, 1990 and before~~

~~27 January 1, 2026 must meet the process requirements of this subsection by June 30, 2029.~~

~~...~~

~~E-2. A municipal timber harvesting ordinance must be pursuant to and consistent with a
comprehensive plan adopted by the legislative body of the municipality.~~

LD 261 ought not pass as drafted. Deleting these lines will make this mandate less objectionable. That said, we do not disagree with MMA's assessment that additional information and revisions to the future compliance requirements may be necessary to justify enactment.

Thank you for your service to our State and your consideration of this request.

Garrett Corbin, Esq.

Town Manager

Carrabassett Valley

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