

Testimony of Tim Glidden in **SUPPORT** of
**LD 870 An Act Regarding the Membership of the
Maine Land Use Planning Commission**

March 20, 2025

Good morning. Senator Talbot Ross, Representative Pluecker, and distinguished members of the Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry Committee, my name is Tim Glidden. I live in Topsham, Maine. I'm retired after a fifty-year career in Maine in the public, private and nonprofit sectors conserving the natural resources and environmental quality of this great state for our children and grandchildren. I've worked to develop sound environmental and conservation policy in Maine including a ten-year stint at the Legislature's Office of Policy and Legal Analysis staffing this committee and several others with jurisdiction over energy, land use and natural resources.

I'm testifying today in support of LD 870.

Maine is blessed with a wide variety of development patterns ranging from urban to rich, agricultural regions to vast, productive working forests and stunning opportunities for recreation. Indeed, the twin pillars of Maine's economy, the forest products industry and tourism are grounded in its natural resources with farming and

fishing adding further emphasis to the Maine's reliance on its lands and waters. Maine is also unique in the entire country in having the ability to plan and manage development in half of the entire state through a citizen-governed commission that is accessible to all residents throughout the state. All those who live and work in Maine have a direct and profound interest in the future of the so-called "unorganized territory". Whether you live north or south, east or west, you have a legitimate stake in the future of the North Woods.

For most of its history the Land Use Planning Commission, formerly LURC, was governed by a board that reflected the breadth and importance of the public interest in these lands. However, during the 2011 reforms, well-intentioned efforts to raise the voice of those living directly in the Commission's jurisdiction swung the pendulum perhaps too far by radically narrowing the demographic scope of its membership. The vast majority of Maine citizens were disenfranchised.

LD 870 suggests a commonsense rebalancing of the legitimate state and local interests among the perspectives represented on the Commission.

Please support LD 870 and restore the voice of all Maine citizens in determining the future of this priceless jewel in Maine's natural heritage.

Thank you for your consideration.