

To: Rep. Rana, Sen. Beebe-Center, Rep. Ankeles, Rep. Bell, Rep. Milliken, Rep. Osher, Rep. Pluecker, Rep. Warren, Sen. Grhohoski, Sen. Tepler, and members of the Environment and Natural Resources' Committee

From: Sharon Peralta, 82 Stanley Road, Springvale, ME 04083

Re: Support for LD 1073 "An Act to Amend Provisions of the Maine Metallic Mining Mineral Act to Advance Health Equity and Improve the Well Being of Vulnerable Populations"

My name is Sharon Peralta and I live in Springvale, ME. I am writing to testify in support of LD 1073.

I have lived in my present home since 2003. When I moved in, trees surrounding this property were green and lush, my shallow dug well was ample and of decent quality. In recent years, I've watched loads of trees go down the road via increased heavy traffic. The air no longer smells fresh, but routinely has chemical odors, trees still standing are covered with lichen and dying. Birds, bats, insects and amphibian populations are noticeably diminished around my property. As I've driven around the area, I see similar dying of woodlands that have not been clearcut. The quality of my well water is diminished. I attribute these changes to unmanaged or poorly managed development and lack of regulation to protect surrounding land, water and communities.

Maine has some beautiful landscapes, with varied timber, lakes, rivers, streams, small ponds, vernal pools, and marshlands. These areas are not only beautiful, but also critical to diversified life which in concert keeps the habitat healthy and productive. Our farmers rely on healthy soil, water and air to grow livestock, flocks and produce. All of us rely on the same for our own physical health. Many of our rural and poor rely on these for their personal gardens, foraging and harvesting fish and game to feed their families. Indeed, in Springvale, I often see people fishing from the bridge on Stanley Road in the Mousam River. I also see them in the same river along Route 109. Many I suspect are not just doing this for sport so much as to provide a meal.

Our indigenous communities are extremely reliant on these sources to provide for themselves. Their communities have also seen some of the worst pollution and destruction, whether it be from toxic landfills to mills polluting their land and waters.

Mining is a destructive industry and leaves nothing in its wake but toxic waste. Soil and rock are torn up, polluted with chemicals and discarded, leaving scars on the land that will not support any kind of life. Containment pools seep, leak, and flood; spewing more toxins onto land and into water. For these reasons, I am in support of LD 1073 which will require strict environmental and human health impact assessments before any approval is considered. This bill outlines many of the impacts that may be noted and leaves room for others that may be discovered. It is my opinion that is a good start to ensuring that any permitted mining operation will not leave behind devastation with the brunt of the cost and impacts thrust upon our poor and indigenous, but rather these costs will be borne by those looking to make a profit—by

doing in-depth assessments before they are approved to start any operation. Furthermore, the requirement to carry ample insurance to cover any harm to neighboring communities by their operations. All operations are to be notified publicly so that surrounding communities are apprised and have a choice to encourage or deny permitting.

The requirement for ongoing monitoring and reporting of operational impacts and emissions while maintaining ample insurance coverage to make whole anyone harmed by the operations, seems a reasonable qualification in my opinion. Any entity making a profit must not be allowed to do so if it costs the health and well-being of those already living in the area.

Thank you for considering my comments.