

## Spencer LD 1073 Testimony in Support

Chairs Doudera and Tepler and Members of the Environment and Natural Resources Committee,

My name is Ed Spencer and I have lived in West Old Town since 1977. When I was 6 years old my grandfather Sidney Spencer died in a copper mine in Bisbee, Arizona. He was 59 years old, and we barely got to know our father's father. Since that time I have observed first-hand the devastation and destruction caused by mining across the United States and Canada.

Strengthening our mining laws is imperative as various extractive interests line up to exploit Maine's mineral resources for the gain of a few and at the expense of the whole. LD 1073 would offer a comprehensive science-based health regimen in any communities affected by mining or smelting. It is vitally important that should extraction forces manage to obtain the right to mine in Maine that there are provisions to monitor human health prior to, during, and beyond mining operations.

In addition, citizens need to be vested in Right to Know procedures at the very outset of any mining inventory and development. There should not need to be official environmental violation notices begun and concluded before protection of citizens' health begins, with the inherent ability to intervene and shut down a mining operation when health is threatened. In addition, there needs to be money set aside in lockbox escrow to cover the operations and post-closure costs and monitoring.

Other states where mining is more common have a set of Mineral Royalty laws in place, so that the extraction of valuable minerals has a public benefit for all citizens. This being said, it is extremely difficult for a mine in Maine to protect our waters and air, due to our wet climate and acidic soils. I took part in the Public Hearings held by LUPC in Millinocket and Bangor which resulted in denial of attempts to mine in Pickett Mtn, near Patten and the East Branch of the Penobscot River. We got a sense for how far entities will bend the truth to get their way. Citizens need protection from unethical mining interests willing to do anything to get their foot in the door and dig up Maine.

Respectfully submitted,

Ed Spencer

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