



**Testimony of DANA A. DORAN Executive Director Professional Logging  
Contractors of the Northeast**

**Before the Joint Standing Committee on Environment and Natural Resources on  
LD 1210, An Act to Regarding Renewable Electricity Generation by Hydropower  
Projects**

**Monday, April 7, 2025**

Senator Tepler, Representative Doudera, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Environment and Natural Resources, my name is Dana Doran, and I am the Executive Director of the Professional Logging Contractors of the Northeast (PLC). The PLC is a regional non-profit educational organization that represents logging and associated trucking contractors throughout the Northeast, predominately in the state of Maine.

As background, the PLC was created in 1995 to give logging and associated trucking contractors a voice in a rapidly changing forest products industry. As of 2021, logging and trucking contractors in Maine employed over 3,000 people directly and were indirectly responsible for the creation of an additional 2,500 jobs. This employment and the investments that contractors make contributed \$582 million to the state's economy. Our membership, which includes over 200 contractor members in the state of Maine and an additional 125 associate members, is responsible for more than 80% of Maine's annual timber harvest.

Thank you for providing me with the opportunity to testify on behalf of our membership in support of LD 1210, An Act to Regarding Renewable Electricity Generation by Hydropower Projects. We appreciate Senator Farrin's support for this legislation.

For background, in August of 2021 the Maine Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) drafted a denial of the water quality certification for the Shawmut Dam that is operated by Brookfield Renewable as part of a federal dam relicensing process. DEP cited concerns with fish passage for Atlantic salmon, with the basis for denial being that fish passage would only be 96 percent effective rather than 99 percent effective.

If the order by DEP had been issued in final form, the decommissioning and removal of the Shawmut Dam would have likely caused the Sappi Somerset Mill to close. The closure of the Sappi Mill would have had a devastating impact on our membership, the forest products industry, and the entire central Maine economy.

This legislation would require DEP to take the state's environmental and economic goals into consideration when choosing to approve or disapprove a permit, notwithstanding the project's effect on wildlife habitat and aquatic life. Furthermore, LD 1210 provides clarity on how

hydropower projects should be evaluated and will streamline the permitting process, making it more predictable for existing businesses and project developers.

The logging and forest products industries are crucial to the region's economy, and losing the Sappi Mill, or any mill for that matter, due to a regulatory process that could be disrupted so easily, would be disastrous to the state.

Regulatory stability is critical if Maine is going to retain businesses and attract new investment. Creating regulatory stability is what LD 1210 intends to accomplish. By updating this permitting process with the legislation before you, it will ensure regulatory stability for hydroelectric facilities and the mills that rely upon them. I urge the committee to please vote ought to pass on LD 1210.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.