



# Maine Forest Products Council

*The voice of Maine's forest economy*

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## Testimony in Support of LD 1212

### **“Resolve, to Study Opportunities for the Efficiency Maine Trust to Support the Promotion and Use of Modern Wood Heating”**

April 9, 2025

Patrick Strauch, Executive Director

Senator Lawrence, Representative Sachs, and member of the Energy, Utilities and Technology Committee, I am Patrick Strauch, Executive Director of the Maine Forest Products Council. I am providing testimony today in support of LD 1212, Resolve, to Study Opportunities for the Efficiency Maine Trust to Support the Promotion and Use of Modern Wood Heating.

For 65 years, the Maine Forest Products Council has served as the voice of Maine's forest economy, representing more than 300 members from all facets of the forest products industry. Our members include pulp and paper mills, sawmills, secondary wood processors, foresters, loggers and truckers. We also represent commercial landowners sustainably managing more than 8 million acres of forestland.

Wood energy is an important sector of Maine's forestry economy, creating opportunities and good jobs within this industry. We need to do more to promote this renewable energy resource, which includes wood pellets and could soon include wood-based biofuels, to elevate Maine's prominence within this market.

Transforming wood waste into biofuels could soon provide an important opportunity to repurpose some of Maine's former mill sites while providing much-needed demand for low-grade softwood pulp that allows for better forest management. Wood-based biofuels can significantly lower greenhouse gas emissions, in some cases by nearly 100 percent, compared to diesel fuel while helping to support other uses for wood products in the state.

Wood-based biofuels are a fitting example of some new exciting products from wood waste that will be made here in Maine. Earlier this year, it was announced that Millinocket will be the site for a new sustainable biocrude production facility. It will utilize sustainably harvested logging residue from local forestry operations and will produce up to 20 million gallons of fast pyrolysis bio-oil yearly. If all goes well, this facility should be up and running by 2027.

This resolve requires the Efficiency Maine Trust, in collaboration with the Department of Economic and Community Development, to work with representatives of the modern wood heating system industry to study and make recommendations relating to programs and incentives encouraging the promotion and use of modern wood heating systems in Maine. The Efficiency Maine Trust must submit a report related to the study to this committee by December. This committee would be authorized to report out a bill during next year's session.

We would like to see this legislation broadened to ensure that biofuels and other innovative wood fuel products that may soon be manufactured here are captured in the study in addition to wood pellets. These new fuels are certain to complement existing systems and will help our state in its efforts to move to more sustainable heating alternatives.

For these reasons, we urge you to support LD 1212. Thank you for your consideration.