



Testimony of

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**Before the Joint Standing Committee on Labor on LD 1993, An Act to
Increase the Annual Cap on Funds Assessed for the Safety Education and
Training Fund**

Monday, January 7, 2026

Senator Tipping, Representative Roeder, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Labor, my name is Dana Doran, and I am the Executive Director of the Professional Logging Contractors of the Northeast (PLC). The PLC is a non-profit educational organization that educates the public on the interests of 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 220 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 the opportunity to testify on behalf of our membership in opposition to LD 1993, An Act to Increase the Annual Cap on Funds Assessed for the Safety Education and Training Fund. While we strongly support safety education and training, we have serious concerns about increasing the annual cap on assessments that are ultimately paid by employers. This increase will affect our members directly because underwriters such as MEMIC, Acadia, and self-insured trusts will have to pay the fee. As a result, the carriers will pass the added costs along to the employer, which includes our membership and all logging contractors that have workers' compensation policies.

The creation of Maine's Paid Family and Medical Leave (PFML) program in 2024 has passed along a new tax increase to employers and many small logging businesses are still adjusting to these increased costs. Adding more financial burden at this time places unnecessary strain on these businesses and they cannot afford another increase to the already exorbitant cost of doing business.

Additionally, LD 1993 provides no guarantee that the additional funds collected will directly benefit the logging and trucking industry. Employers will be charged more without receiving the direct benefit of the additional funding to improve workplace safety.

That said, we are open to a conversation. If the Legislature's intent is to enhance workplace safety, we believe there is a path forward. For example, the state of Minnesota implemented a model approximately 20 years ago that tied employer assessments directly to safety training resources for the contributing industries. This ensured funds collected were reinvested back into the industries generating them to help offset costs and improve safety. We would welcome discussions around something similar in Maine, rather than increasing assessments without a clear return.

I respectfully urge the committee to oppose LD 1993 as written and instead work with employers and industry stakeholders on solutions that improve safety for their employees without further burdening Maine's small businesses.