



Russell Black  
Senator, District 5

THE MAINE SENATE  
131st Legislature

3 State House Station  
Augusta, Maine 04333

## TESTIMONY OF SENATOR RUSSELL BLACK

LD 1048

**“An Act Regarding the Authority of Municipalities to Regulate Timber Harvesting”**

**Public Hearing: March 20, 2023**

Senator Ingwersen, Representative Pluecker and distinguished members of the Committee, I am Senator Russell Black and I am here today to introduce my bill, LD 1048, “An Act Regarding the Authority of Municipalities to Regulate Timber Harvesting.”

LD 1048 is here before you today as a result of a bill I sponsored in the first session of the 130<sup>th</sup> legislature. That bill, LD 1407, dealt with a broad array of forestry issues, and was ultimately turned into a resolve that required the Maine Forest Service to convene a stakeholder group to review and assess the process relating to municipal proposals to adopt or amend timber harvesting ordinances.

The Maine Forest Service convened the stakeholders and the group met 4 times in 2021. The Maine Forest Service then presented the stakeholder report to this Committee during the Second Session of the 130<sup>th</sup> Legislature. Based on the stakeholder’s recommendations, this Committee developed a Committee bill, LD 2012. LD 2012 never received reference to committee and died at the end of the session without having had a public hearing.

The bill before you today contains the exact same language, other than some changes to dates, as the language that appeared in LD 2012. The recommendations of the stakeholder group are intended to resolve issues regarding municipal compliance with 12 M.R.S. § 8869(8), part of the Forest Practices Act. The recommendations of the stakeholder group were reached by consensus of the group after discussion and input by the public.

When Tom Doak from Maine Woodland Owners, one of the stakeholders on the group, approached me about this bill I agreed to bring it back because I thought it was important that it have a hearing before this Committee. The Committee deserves to weigh in on the

recommendations of the stakeholder group, recommendations this Committee specifically requested back when LD 1407 was passed.

You'll hear directly from others what specific changes are being made and why they feel these changes are important. What I can say is that enacting these changes will bring consistency to timber harvesting ordinances across the state by ensuring that any municipality that has enacted a timber harvesting ordinance has done so in consultation with the Maine Forest Service and in accordance with the Forest Practices Act.

You may wish to save your questions for Mr. Doak or the Maine Forest Service. Thank you for the opportunity to present LD 1048.