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Testimony of Representative Michael Brennan Introducing
**LD 1162, An Act to Protect the Environment by Funding Ash Tree
Management**

Before the Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

Good morning, Senator Ingwersen, Representative Pluecker and honorable members of the Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry Committee. My name is Michael Brennan, and I represent House district 115, which includes a portion of Portland. I am here to introduce **LD 1162, An Act to Protect the Environment by Funding Ash Tree Management**.

The emerald ash borer is one of the most serious invasive species threatening our ash resources and forests. All species of native ash trees that grow in Maine, with the exception of mountain ash, are susceptible to injury and death by the emerald ash borer. They tunnel through the conductive tissue of trees and cut off the flow of water and nutrients, killing the trees in five years or less.

When we lose our ash trees, we lose a crucial food source for wildlife and a key material for traditional basket making, which is important in the cultural traditions of the Wabanaki tribes of the region. With the loss of this resource, we can expect potential economic impacts of nearly \$320 million to forest landowners. The removal of dying and dead trees will cost millions of dollars and will impact our tree-lined communities.

This bill simply provides ongoing funding of \$500,000 to provide grants to towns and municipalities to address ash tree disease issues and expand tree replacement efforts.

Thank you for considering this legislation. I am happy to help answer any questions you may have.