

Chair Ingwersen and Chair Pluecker and the distinguished members of the Committee On Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

My name is Phoebe Dolan, I live in Swanville, Maine and I am the Co-Director of Maine Youth Power, a youth-led, youth movement throughout rural and suburban Maine fighting to win human dignity, equity and a livable future for all. I am here today to ask that you support Senator Hickman's bill LD 1274 An Act to Increase Land Access for Historically Disadvantaged Populations.

I live in glorious Waldo County, one of Maine's incredible small and organic farm communities. I live on a small farm where lamb and beef are raised, farming is an incredible career and I am in awe of all the farmers I know who grow the food I eat. As Mainers, we are proud of our farms and farming communities and the land that white people farm on in America is not their own. Many thousands of years Indigenous people have taken care of the land and maintained its beauty and vitality. White people in the United States have used forced labor in the form of slavery to cultivate this land and take the bounty from its workers.

Maine has a responsibility to grant land to Black farmers who live here today, there has been a long enough history of land dispossession coming from the history of slavery in our country. We must take this crucial step to enact a program to train and grant land to Black farmers to keep Maine the beautiful farming community and grow equitably.

Members of the Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, I urge you to support LD 1274 An Act to Increase Land Access for Historically Disadvantaged Populations.

Thank you for listening