

**Testimony of Jim Nizamoff in Support of LD 1476 and LD 1433 and in Opposition to LD  
1363 and LD 1508**

Senator Brenner, Representative Gramlich and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Environment and Natural Resources, I am Jim Nizamoff, a resident of Hebron, Maine, and I am here representing myself as a geologist.

As a young boy growing up in northeastern Connecticut, I developed a passion for rocks and minerals and soon found that Western Maine is rich in collectible rocks and minerals (granitic pegmatites, tourmaline, beryl, etc.). My hobby eventually turned into a profession, and I have been exploring and studying Maine pegmatites for more than 40 years.

I strongly urge you to approve legislation that allows environmentally responsible quarrying of granite pegmatites to proceed in accordance with Maine's Performance Standards for Quarries. Therefore, I am testifying in support of LD 1476 and LD 1433. The state of Maine has a proud history of quarrying granite as well as feldspar mining in granitic pegmatites. Granite is an igneous rock that is typically composed of feldspars, quartz and mica. Pegmatite is a textural term and refers to an igneous rock that is composed of very large crystals. Granitic pegmatites are essentially very coarsely crystallized igneous rocks composed of feldspars, quartz and mica or more simply, a granite that contains big crystals.

Spodumene is a silicate mineral that contains lithium. It should be understood that lithium does not exist in nature as a metal but is always bonded with other elements. Instead, spodumene found in certain granitic pegmatites can be sent to a conversion plant where it is processed to produce lithium salts. There are currently no active conversion plants in the USA, but the federal government is investing in developing some. Some spodumene deposits are naturally concentrated while others may require chemical processes to reach economically

feasible concentrations. I believe it would be reasonable to regulate chemical processing under Maine's Metallic Mineral Mining Act. The excavation, however, of spodumene, which is a silicate mineral that does not present risks of acid rock drainage, should be allowed to continue under the Performance Standards for Quarries. LD 1476 and LD 1433 would allow that to occur.

LD 1363, as drafted, is problematic because the definition of a metallic mineral would include any material that has a metal or a metalloid element as its economically valuable constituent. This would mean that materials such as limestone, sand, gravel, crushed stone and many other materials might be subject to stringent regulations under Maine's Metallic Mineral Mining Act.

Thank you for consideration of my comments and I am happy to answer any questions.

Jim Nizamoff

Hebron, Maine