

Labor and Housing Committee (Cross Office Building room 202)

Wednesday, April 19 at 10:00am

Hello Senator Tipping, Representative Roeder, and esteemed members of the Committee on Labor and Housing

My name is Gordeen Skolfield, I am from the western Maine town of Weld near Mount Blue State Park.

I would like to speak in support of LD1499: An Act Regarding Penalties for Early Retirement.

I was an employee of the Maine Department of Conservation, Bureau of Parks and Lands for 28 years. I started in 1983 with the expectation of being eligible for retirement at age 60 with a penalty of 2.25% for every year under age 60. In 1993 the retirement eligibility was changed to age 62 with a penalty of 6% for every year under age 62. I missed that cut off (or "Cliff") by 28 days.

I had to retire in 2011 to secure my Health Insurance. I was 58 years old so I was 4 years under age 62. I ended my time of service with a 24% penalty. I feel the terms and conditions of my employment were arbitrarily changed twice in the course of my employment, once with regards to Retirement Eligibility and once for Insurance Eligibility.

As a former State Employee with little Social Security I depend on as much of my full pension as I can get. I would appreciate anything this Legislature can do to correct this unfortunate circumstance.

Thank you for hearing me. I would be happy to answer any questions the committee may have.