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Senator, District 4



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THE MAINE SENATE
131st Legislature

Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services
In Support of L.D. 2230, *"An Act to Change Department of Health and Human Services Rules
Regarding Youth Camps to Major Substantive Rules"*
March 5th, 2024

Senator Baldacci, Representative Meyer, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services: I am Senator Stacey Guerin and I represent District 4, which includes all of Piscataquis County and 11 communities in Penobscot County. Please accept my testimony in support of L.D. 2230, *"An Act to Change Department of Health and Human Services Rules Regarding Youth Camps to Major Substantive Rules."*

As we all know, summer camps are a vital part of Maine's economy. They generate thousands of jobs both full time and seasonal, while also providing hundreds of millions for Maine's economy and tens of millions in tax revenue.

One of these Maine camps- Treworgy Family Orchards in Levant, which is owned and operated by constituents of mine- has communicated their concerns with these proposed rules and regulations. They have operated a summer camp on their farm for over 23 years and have had thousands of kids attend their farm camp. Not once has a camper experienced a serious injury or illness induced by improper interactions with farm animals.

Treworgy Family Orchards camp and all other Maine summer camps emphasize the safety of their campers and the importance of doing so. While I agree with the main intent of these new rules which appear to emphasize the safety of children in camping situations, I see issues with a number of them. The main issue I see is that these rules could result in many unintended effects, some of which go against the purpose of these new rules by presenting added risks to children. Implementing these rules upon camps can prove to be extremely burdensome, while also introducing additional, unnecessary risks.

The Legislature should have oversight over rule changes such as the ones proposed to our state's summer camps. This is why I urge you to support L.D. 2230. Thank you for your consideration.

Innovation, Development, Economic Advancement and Business Committee
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