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WOODLAND PULP LLC TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO LD-1985:

An Act to Authorize Removal of Requirements of Forest Certification Systems from The State's Forest Management Plans.

April 3, 2024

Good afternoon Senator Ingwersen, Representative Pluecker and members of the Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry Committee;

Woodland Pulp in Baileyville has approximately 320 employees, supplies a portion of pulp production to sister Company St. Croix Tissue that employs nearly 90 additional employees and lastly, Woodland Pulp derives the majority of its wood chips from sister company St. Croix Chipping, LLC that employs another 35 employees.

On behalf Woodland Pulp in Baileyville, I submit this written testimony in opposition to this bill.

As noted above, a portion of the Woodland Pulp mill's capacity is used to produce tissue products. However, the majority of the production capacity is in the form of dried pulp sheets that are baled and packaged for shipment to our pulp customers in both the domestic and export markets.

Increasingly, we receive detailed inquiries from our pulp customers asking for information on where and how we source our fiber. Our customers want to be assured the pulp they receive is being harvested legally and SUSTAINABLY and understandably so.

In our view, the State of Maine has been and will need to be a key supplier of certified fiber in the future to support the three mills in Baileyville and the nearly 450 employees that depend on our mills operating.

Holding and maintaining a certification takes commitment, time and energy. We know this first hand. The state has worked hard to maintain certified lands and should be very proud to hold forestry certifications. This is a tremendous selling point, if you will.

Eradicating state certification appears to fly in the face of the State's proud heritage of wise forest management and the increasingly important climate action goals. We also believe this decertification requirement sends a troubling message outside of Maine and thus, gives the state a proverbial "black eye".

We also have some concerns with the payment language and recommend to the committee that these terms and conditions are best left to the elements of our contracts that we execute with our suppliers.

In closing, we ask the committee to oppose this bill by voting ought not to pass.

Thank you for considering our concerns.

Sincerely,

Stephen Follette
Fiber Procurement Manager
Woodland Pulp LLC