



# Maine Professional Guides Association

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## Testimony in Opposition to LD 552

### An Act to Create an Outfitter License for Owners and Operators of Hunting, Fishing and Recreation Businesses Who Are Not Maine Guides

February 24, 2025

Senator Baldacci, Representative Roberts and members of the committee, my name is James Cote and I am here today on behalf of the Maine Professional Guides Association in opposition to LD 552.

This legislation is nearly identical to that of LD 1599 which was proposed in the previous Legislature. The Maine Professional Guides Association maintains the same concerns that we did at that time.

First, amending the definition of “guide” as proposed in LD 552 could have significant unintended consequences as it could capture all kinds of people who today are not guides. We have had extensive discussions with stakeholders in recent years about the statutory definition of “guide” and continue to maintain that the current definition is valid and valuable and captures those people participating in guiding activities appropriately. Maine’s guiding requirements continue to be known worldwide as some of the most rigorous, and as a result, we produce some of the finest, most professional and capable guides anywhere in the world.

Second, we are unsure what the benefit of creating an outfitter license would be, or why it needs to be created. The current definition of guide already captures activities where guide training and education is necessary, and where it is appropriate to regulate these activities. Creating this new license would be 1) duplicative in many cases, and 2) create an additional, unwarranted layer of fees and requirements that could unintentionally apply to businesses from Maine and afar. While “outfitters” may be a regulated term in places like western states, it is not interchangeable here in Maine under our current regulatory structure.

For these reasons, we urge you to oppose this legislation as the previous Legislature did. Thank you for your consideration and I would be pleased to answer any questions or follow up with additional information as requested.