



Craig V. Hickman
Senator, District 14

THE MAINE SENATE
132nd Legislature

3 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333

Testimony of Senator Craig V. Hickman supporting
**LD 311, An Act to Improve Efficiency of Meat and Poultry Processing Facilities by Requiring
the Designation of State Inspectors as Essential**
Before the Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry
Thursday, March 6

Senator Talbot Ross, Representative Pluecker, and honorable members of the Committee on Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry, my name is Craig Hickman, and I am proud to represent Senate District 14, twelve municipalities in southern Kennebec County including my beloved hometown of Winthrop. Thank you for the opportunity to speak in support of LD 311, "An Act to Improve Efficiency of Meat and Poultry Processing Facilities by Requiring the Designation of State Inspectors as Essential."

As many of you may know, I am a farmer and the co-author of Maine's Right to Food constitutional amendment. I remain a strong advocate of resilient local food systems, which include meat and poultry processing facilities.

On just about every snow day, I receive a call from the owner of West Gardiner Beef requesting that we take any and all action to get state inspectors designated as essential employees in order to avoid bottlenecks and ensure the best quality product for food producers and consumers.

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to speak in support of this bill. I hope you will join me in supporting this measure to improve the resiliency of our local food ecosystem. I would be happy to answer any questions you might have.

Craig V. Hickman
State Senator, District 14