

Thank you, Senator Curry, Representative Gere, and members of the Housing and Economic Development Committee.

I appreciate the opportunity to speak before you this day on LD 603 – An Act to Ensure That the Exemption of the Certain Agricultural Buildings from the Maine Uniform Building and Energy Code Includes Maple Sugarhouses.

We already know the law allows certain exemptions under Title 10.

(3) That building materials from local sawmills, including but not limited to nongraded lumber, are permissible under the Maine Uniform Building and Energy Code; and

(4) That buildings used to house livestock, store harvested crops or cultivate crops are not subject to the Maine Uniform Building and Energy Code. The exemption in this subparagraph does not include the cultivation of cannabis regulated under Title 22 or 28-B; [PL 2023, c. 527, §1 (AMD).]

This bill will help the Maple Syrup industry by cutting out the “middleman” of government regulation.

I read a Maine Policy Institute story, from 2012, which indicated the cost of doing business, in Maine, is 6.4% higher than the national average. What’s the cost in today’s dollars?

These sugar shacks typically hold nothing more than Pex tubing, bottles, and an evaporator. Buildings that are nothing more than 4 walls and a roof.

My cousin spent over \$100,000 on his oil-based evaporator – nothing more than a big furnace. I think of the financing he has wrapped up in his business already. Not to mention the time he has invested.

Did you know it takes 40 gallons of tree sap to make one gallon of syrup?

How can we take unnecessary burdens off our Maine farmers?

Can’t we make working in Maine easier? More affordable?

This bill is one step in the direction of a more prosperous Maine.

Thank you for your time today,

Alicia Collins