

Testimony by James Robbins in support of LD 1313 before the
Taxation Committee on April 9th at 1 pm in State House Room
127

My name is James Robbins from Searsmont, Maine. I am a former owner and president of Robbins Lumber Company. We have white pine sawmills in Searsmont and East Baldwin. We also run a lumber painting plant and 8.5-megawatt power plant in Searsmont. We employ about 200 men and women here in Maine.

I am also a member of the executive committee of the Maine Forest Products Council.

Since 2011, depreciable machinery and equipment purchased for “commercial wood harvesting” has qualified for a sales tax exemption/refund. Our bill, LD 1313 amends the definition of “commercial wood harvesting equipment” to include equipment and machinery used for hauling forest products such as logs, pulpwood, firewood and chips.

With the demise of many of our pulp and paper mills the markets for our forest products are less abundant and now many times require longer hauls- which increases the costs to the truckers. Now that tariffs are being put on all automobiles and trucks, the costs of the trucks, we believe, are going up substantially. Therefore, the loggers need relief from the added expense of buying trucks and trailers to haul wood. It doesn't do the mills or the loggers any good to harvest the wood if the loggers can't afford to buy the trucks, trailers, and other equipment, to haul their wood products to market.

The taxes to do business in Maine are very high. Here is an opportunity to help the loggers and truckers stay in business.

We mills depend on the loggers to supply our mills. If the loggers go out of business, so will the mills.

I hope you will vote to support LD 1313.

Thank you.

James Robbins