



Testimony of

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Before the Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology on LD 1212, Resolve, to Study Opportunities for the Efficiency Maine Trust to Support the Promotion and Use of Modern Wood Heating

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Senator Lawrence, Representative Sachs, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology, my name is Dana Doran, and I am the Executive Director of the Professional Logging Contractors of the Northeast (PLC). The PLC is a regional educational non-profit organization that represents logging and associated trucking contractors throughout the Northeast, predominately in the state of Maine.

As background, the PLC was created in 1995 to give logging and associated trucking contractors a voice in a rapidly changing forest products industry. As of 2021, logging and trucking contractors in Maine employed over 3,000 people directly and were indirectly responsible for the creation of an additional 2,500 jobs. This employment and the investments that contractors make contributed \$582 million to the state's economy. Our membership, which includes over 200 contractor members in the state of Maine and an additional 125 associate members, is responsible for more than 80% of Maine's annual timber harvest.

Thank you for providing me the opportunity to testify on behalf of our membership in support of, LD 1212, "Resolve, to Study Opportunities for the Efficiency Maine Trust to Support the Promotion and Use of Modern Wood Heating". The legislation would require collaboration between Efficiency Maine, the Department of Economic and Community Development, and members of the modern wood heating industry to study and make recommendations to promote wood heating systems in Maine.

From our perspective, wood energy should play a pivotal role in Maine's pathway to reduce its reliance upon fossil fuels and achieve carbon neutrality. The use of wood over heating oil provides a significant carbon offset as it is carbon neutral and does not introduce new GHG's in the atmosphere. According to the The Maine Department of Environmental Protection's (DEP) 9th Biennial Report on Progress toward Greenhouse Gas Reduction Goals, it recognizes that due to the cyclic nature of forest sequestration (page 21), wood products that are burned do not release any new GHG into the atmosphere vs. wood that decays naturally.

Wood and wood pellets are readily available, and the dollars spent on them circulate directly throughout our state economy rather than out of state or overseas. At the same time, harvesting this renewable resource supports Maine jobs and rural communities while reducing fossil fuel dependency and contributing to the fight against climate change. It is unfortunate that in the most forested state in the country, after years of work to develop modern wood heating systems, wood does not receive the same promotion and acknowledgement as other heating sources.

While this is a Resolve and does not have the weight of statute, from our perspective, it will go a long way toward the revitalization of Maine's low-grade markets, which is desperately needed. Additionally, by encouraging marketing and the furtherance of workforce development programs that will encourage the utilization of one of our greatest natural resources, the benefits would not only provide value to the consumer but strengthen the health of the forest and the entire supply chain.

In closing, Maine needs to do a better job of championing ALL clean energy options. Wood has proven time and time again to be a reliable source for heat and electricity production. If wood is not part of our path forward, it will be a disservice to the wood products industry, which makes up a large portion of the economy in the state.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I urge you to vote ought to pass on this resolve.

I would be happy to answer any questions you might have.