

**Testimony of Adam Cote
in Favor of LD 1212
“Resolve, to Study Opportunities for the Efficiency Maine Trust to Support the
Promotion and Use of Modern Wood Heating”**

Senator Lawrence, Representative Sachs and members of the Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology. My name is Adam Cote. I am an attorney at Drummond Woodsum and I am here today on behalf of my client, the Maine Pellet Fuels Association. I am here today to speak to you in favor of LD 1212, a *“Resolve to Study Opportunities for the Efficiency Maine Trust to Support the Promotion and Use of Modern Wood Heating.”*

The Maine Pellet Fuels Association includes a collection of Maine wood pellet heating equipment (whole home boilers and stoves), installers, deliverers and manufacturers from throughout Maine. Because our product relies on saw dust and wood waste, we work closely with loggers and forestry industry. Wood pellets are not only renewable and sustainable, they also support price stabilization and efficiency within the forestry and logging industry, ensuring that all of the products from forestry and logging are used. This supports the entire life cycle usage of forested trees in Maine. It also contributes to ensure the entirety of every tree is sustainably harvested in Maine in an environmentally responsible manner. And lastly, it supports one of Maine’s most iconic and traditional forms of heating. It is the only form of heating that relies solely on Maine for its production and sustainability.

The Maine legislature and Governor have shown support for this industry through passage of the Thermal Renewable Energy Credits (“T-RECs”) under LD 1494 which created Maine’s new PRS program in the 129th Legislature (in 2019) and the subsequent enactment of the Thermal Energy Investment Program in LD 597 (130th Legislature in 2021). These two programs have been successful and they have created an opportunity, which today’s Resolve hopes to build from.

We currently have a funding source to support the modern heating industry in Maine. What we lack is a plan to use those funds in a targeted and specific manner.

We also have lessons learned from our neighbors that should be studied and explored. Maine is similar in many ways to New Hampshire and Vermont. We have similar

demographics, similar populations, housing stock and weather. We also have similar laws in place to support the modern wood heat industry. New Hampshire, for example, was the first State to enact a thermal REC program. The differences in adoption of modern wood heating as a viable option to support diverse heating needs for homes and businesses, however, is stark. Both New Hampshire and Vermont have strongly adopted modern wood heating as an option. In Vermont, for example, one out of every three students attends a school heated with either wood pellets or wood chips. In New Hampshire, numerous schools, hospitals and businesses have installed wood pellet or wood chip boilers to stabilize and reduce their energy costs. In Maine that hasn't happened. And we believe it needs to happen. We need diverse, environmentally sustainable heating options for our homes and businesses.

We are hopeful that, through partnering with the State to study this issue, we can find some answers to present to you in December. Then we can implement the plan. This Resolve will not cost the state any money. It does involve a legislative sentiment and support that the state commits to working closely with our industry to find some solutions that will help develop a strategy that will be beneficial to the entire state. We think it will be a worthwhile effort and we hope that you agree.

For these reasons, I would ask you to vote in favor of this Resolve. Thank you for your consideration. I would be happy to answer any questions that you may have.