



Sue Bernard
Senator, District 1

THE MAINE SENATE
132nd Legislature

3 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333

LD 2006, "Resolve, Authorizing the Director of the Bureau of Parks and Lands to Make Certain Land Transactions in Aroostook and Somerset Counties"

Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

Public Hearing

January 7, 2026

1:00pm

Senator Talbot Ross, Representative Pluecker and Esteemed Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry:

I am Senator Sue Bernard and I represent District 1, comprised of 37 communities in Northern Aroostook County. I am here today to present LD 2006, "Resolve, Authorizing the Director of the Bureau of Parks and Lands to Make Certain Land Transactions in Aroostook and Somerset Counties."

Citizens of Westmanland reached out to me regarding the next steps in allowing the town to purchase a road from the State of Maine. The town had been in communication with the Bureau of Parks and Lands about the purchase of the Little Madawaska Lake Road.

One of the requirements for this transaction was that the town vote to purchase this land from the State of Maine. During the town meeting in March of 2025 this was approved, and a letter was sent to the Bureau of Parks and Lands.

One of my constituents informed me this is an important transaction for those who live on the road. As it stands now, the town cannot receive any grant money for maintenance of the Little Madawaska Lake Road and the State does not have an interest in maintaining the road. The road runs to the lots on the lake which were sold in the 1990s. The road is a dead end, and the fire lanes are no longer useable. Because this is considered state land, the town does not have an obligation to maintain the road. There are approximately 30 full-time residents now and the subject has been brought up numerous times regarding whether the town may even have a liability for doing maintenance on that portion of road.

If the town acquires the road as this bill directs, then the confusion on who is responsible for the maintenance of the road will be eliminated; and grant monies received by the town can be used for this road maintenance.

This bill also authorizes land transactions outside of my district. There are others who will speak after me on the importance of these transactions.

Each one of these land transactions alleviate confusing land ownership disagreements and benefits both parties involved. For these reasons, I urge you to vote Ought to Pass.

Thank you for your time. I am happy to answer questions, but I encourage you to direct them to those who follow me as they have more firsthand knowledge.