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LD 33, “An Act to Improve the Laws Governing Hemp by Bringing Them into Compliance with Federal Law”

Good morning Senator Dill, Representative O’Neil and members of the Committee on Agriculture, Conservation & Forestry. I am Senator Russell Black and I represent Senate District 17. I am here today to present L.D. 33 “An Act to Improve the Laws Governing Hemp by Bringing Them into Compliance with Federal Law”

I am here as the sponsor of LD 33, An Act to Improve the Laws Governing Hemp by Bringing Them into Compliance with Federal Law.

I support this bill in order to bring the State of Maine’s Hemp Program into compliance with federal USDA requirements. With hemp farming now allowed under federal law, USDA requires that there is consistency among the states regarding state hemp programs. This bill puts forward a number of adjustments to current Maine state law that will bring us in line with USDA’s requirements. Most of them are minor and can be readily explained by Department of Agriculture staff.

The agricultural production of hemp in Maine and across the country has faced headwinds recently due to oversaturation and other market dynamics. However, by bringing Maine’s hemp regulations in line with federal standards, there will be stability to the state’s oversight of this important crop. Growers will understand the hemp program’s parameters and can plan accordingly. Hopefully, brighter days are ahead for Maine hemp producers.