

March 2, 2021

Testimony on LD 125 An Act To Prohibit the Aerial Spraying of Glyphosate and Other Synthetic Herbicides for the Purpose of Silviculture.

To the Honorable President Troy Jackson, Honorable Speaker Ryan Fecteau and distinguished members of the Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry Committee:

My name is Doretta Colburn, of Waterford, Maine and **this written testimony is urging you to vote unanimously “ought to pass” on LD 125.**

My husband and I own and operate Beech Hill Farm and Bison Ranch on land that has been in his family since 1906, then as a dairy farm. When Ted’s cousin was selling the farm 12 years ago we decided to move here in order to keep this land in the family and maintain it as an active farm which we have done since that time. From our perch on the side of Beech Hill, we are fortunate to look out over the north western foothills at the forest land established there and are surrounded by forest on the uphill side our land, 27 acres of which we own.

First and foremost on our minds when we purchased the farm was to put our energies into restoring this once fertile land, fields and forest by rebuilding soil health and, working with MOFGA and USDA, to develop organic and regenerative practices. We are proud to see our efforts paying off with a more sustainable farm that produces meat, along with a variety of vegetables and fruits that we sell locally. We recognize that the value of our farmland and waterways are small examples of the precious balance of our environment throughout Maine and therefore, are grateful for the measure of importance LD 125 expresses.

We have been fortunate to have one of our daughters with her family move to Waterford from out of state and work along side us. Our grandsons, ages 3 and 6, are two of the most enthusiastic harvesters. We feel proud that what they are eating is wholesome and nutritious and that the land we will leave them one day is fertile and sustainable. We would not be able to say that should aerial spraying for forest management happen in the future along the land that abuts our farm impacting our water supply, our air quality and soil health.

Sadly, there are those today who live in regions of our State where this is already taking place. Consequently:

- there is a real threat of contamination of water and air with herbicides known to be harmful to humans and animals.
- erosion and runoff carry not only precious soil that clog streams and rivers, but toxic herbicides that in turn affect the rich life of our waterways.
- aerial spraying of glyphosate and other toxic herbicides in forest management adversely impact the growth of important diverse vegetative species that benefit soil health and carbon sequestration.
- essential biodiversity of plant and animal life are negatively impacted as toxins contaminate their natural habitat and protective canopies are decreased.

For the sake of the land, air and waterways, not just our own, but throughout our State, I urge you to unanimously vote “ought to pass” LD 125.

Thank you for considering this testimony.

Doretta Colburn
630 Valley Road
Waterford, Maine 04088
(207)583-2515
colburndoretta@gmail.com