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Members of the Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry Committee: I am writing in support of LD 125, An Act to Prohibit the Aerial Spraying of Glyphosate and other Synthetic Herbicides for the Purpose of Silviculture.

Aerial spraying in Maine using glyphosate and other synthetic herbicides has one purpose and that is to establish monoculture tree stands for clearcutting. Clearcutting is primarily the forest management practice of industrial forestry companies. Maine should support sustainable forestry, not clearcutting.

Maine has nearly 150 forestry companies, nearly all small. Some are small companies with crews and many are single logger operations. Combined, they provide jobs throughout the state including Maine's most isolated rural communities.

Forests are both a cause of and a solution to addressing climate change. To address climate change, wood is one natural, renewable resource which can provide alternative products to those now produced using fossil fuels. Maine can be an important source of fossil fuel alternative products.

Time is of the essence. Maine, like the U.S. in general, is far behind in addressing climate change. Most of Maine's forestry companies practice sustainable forestry partly out of company mission, partly because most of Maine's companies are not staffed, equipped or organized to do clearcutting, or may log in regions where there are few large tree stands. Maine needs to move quickly to getting our tree growth in biodiverse forests and this will take time. Continued spraying of herbicides accomplishes nothing to establish biodiverse forests. Maine's small forestry companies and independent loggers need biodiverse forests to establish a broader market for wood.

My brother is an independent logger in western Massachusetts. He works hard, loves his work in the woods, is productive and has an incredible reputation for responsible logging. I have met folks in Maine who know him by his good reputation alone because he has never logged in Maine. I mention this to say that I have a little bit of "insider" information about logging as an independent logger.

Logging is a challenging profession economically. We should be working to support and enable independent and small loggers. Every year that we continue to permit clearcutting we jeopardize the future of the majority of logging companies in Maine. We could actually grow this part of Maine's economy.

I recognize that many people object to any form of logging. However, sustainable forestry should be a part of Maine's contribution to climate change mitigation.
Thank you for the opportunity to testify.