

2/21/21

To: Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry

From: Anna Siegel

Re: Testimony Against LD 324, An Act To Limit Public Land Ownership in Maine

I am writing as a student and climate activist to urge you to vote “ought **not** to pass” on LD 324.

Limiting publicly-owned lands in Maine is not only morally wrong but would be an action in opposition to Maine’s climate goals. Strategy E(1) of the Maine Climate Council report *Maine Won’t Wait* reads that we must “increase by 2030 the total acreage of conserved lands in the state to 30% through voluntary, focused purchases of land and working forest or farm conservation easements.” This is an important step to both preserve biodiversity and promote carbon sequestration through forests and wetlands.

Meanwhile, LD 324 “limits publicly owned land in the State to no more than 33% of the total land area of the State and 50% of the land area in any county,” as stated in the summary of the bill. Though the percentage numbers of LD 324 would technically allow the 30% goal of Strategy E(1) to be reached, the Maine Climate Council strategy should be viewed as a minimum and it’s illogical to put a cap at all on the beauty and glory that public lands hold.

Some of my happiest memories are from roaming Caribou Mountain, searching for birds on Monhegan Island, and setting up camp on the rocky coast of Acadia National Park. I wish to explore more public lands, see novel ones be established, and for future generations to cultivate the same memories in places new and old. This is why I urge you to not pass LD 324 and continue following the recommendations of the Maine Climate Council.

Respectfully submitted,
Anna Siegel

Anna Siegel
Yarmouth

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