



**BACKCOUNTRY
HUNTERS & ANGLERS**
NEW ENGLAND

March 17, 2021

Committee on Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry
c/o Legislative Information Office
100 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333

Re: LD 471 – An Act To Require Legislative Approval for Certain Leases of Public Lands

Dear Senator Dill, Representative O'Neil, and Members of the Committee on Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry:

Backcountry Hunters and Anglers (BHA) is the fastest growing hunting and angling group in North America. A core program area for BHA is the sound stewardship of our local, state, and federal public lands.

BHA supports the provisions of this bill that would define transmission lines and facilities, landing strips, pipelines and railroad tracks as substantially altering the uses of the land and therefore requiring a 2/3 vote of the legislature. There is no doubt that these land use changes significantly alter wildlife habitat on public lands and diminish the value of outdoor experiences of hunters, anglers, and other recreational users.

Maine ranks 37th in the US for the areas in public land ownership and we cannot afford to lose or degrade our public lands without a full debate and vote of the Legislature.

BHA is neither for nor against the provision that would make the bill retroactive to September 16, 2014.

Thank you very much for considering the position of sportsmen and women who enjoy Maine's public lands.

Sincerely,

John Simoneau, New England Chapter Secretary
and Maine Chair
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