

Mikki Rice
Freeman Township

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In Support Of:

LD# 1075 An Act to Protect Public Lands

Presented by Senator BENNETT of Oxford.

Cosponsored by Representative O'NEIL of Saco & Senators: BLACK of Franklin, BRENNER of Cumberland, MAXMIN of Lincoln, Representatives: GROHOSKI of Ellsworth, LANDRY of Farmington, SKOLFIELD of Weld.

Dear Senator Jim Dill, Representative Maggie O'Neil, and other members of the Agriculture Conservation and Forestry Committee,

In 1993, 72% of Mainers voted to protect Maine's public lands by amending the Maine Constitution to require a vote of 2/3 of the Legislature for sales or leases that substantially reduce or alter the value of land held in public trust. That amendment to the Maine Constitution did not specify what a reduction or substantial alteration of value is, essentially creating a loophole for shady companies like CMP to take advantage of. Which is exactly how two administrations in a row have issued leases to CMP without the constitutionally-required Legislative vote. Justice Murphy confirmed this when she found that the Bureau didn't properly identify if the NECEC would substantially reduce or alter the value of the land before issuing the leases.

Mainers made their voices heard in 1993 when they voted for the amendment. They made it clear that we want a say in the sale of public lands that are going to reduce or substantially alter the value of those lands and LD 1075 puts an objective process in place to determine if a proposed activity on designated land would cause the land to be reduced or substantially altered closing that loophole and ensuring openness and transparency going forward.

I urge you to vote Ought to pass on LD 1075 to ensure that the Maine Constitution is upheld and that there is no longer a loophole for major leases to be approved on public lands that are going to reduce or substantially alter their value without the approval of $\frac{2}{3}$ of the Maine Legislature.

Thank you.
Mikki Rice.