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March 30, 2021

Senator James Dill, Chair
Representative Maggie O'Neill, Chair
Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

Re: Testimony for [LD 1075](#)

Dear Senator Dill and Representative O'Neill and esteemed members of the Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry,

My name is Eben Sypitkowski, as as the Director of Baxter State Park, I respectfully submit this testimony neither for nor against LD 1075, "An Act to Protect Public Lands".

The Bureau of Public Lands is not the only agency that owns and manages designated lands, as defined by in [12 M.R.S. § 598-A](#). For Baxter State Park, designated lands include two parcels of land acquired by the Baxter State Park Authority for the purposes of forest management, one in Mount Chase, and another in Harpswell, Maine.

To be clear, the lands deeded by Governor Baxter to the state of Maine and those lands purchased after his death but contiguous to lands he deeded are NOT so-called designated lands under 12 M.R.S. § 598-A, and therefore would not appear to be affected by this bill.

As written, this bill would require the Bureau of Public Lands to promulgate rules establishing "an objective evaluation process for determining if a proposed activity on land designated under this chapter would cause the land to be reduced or substantially altered." Does the committee intend for the Bureau of Public Lands to adopt rules that would then apply to other agencies which hold designated lands?

Alternatively, is the committee interested in requiring other agencies that hold designated lands under 12 M.R.S. § 598-A to develop and establish their own rules and processes for assessing whether “proposed activity...would cause the land to be reduced or substantially altered”? This seems unnecessary for activities that are already encumbered by deed restrictions and managed subject to management plans, and consistent with the directives of the Authority.

The Baxter State Park Authority is the government agency that holds jurisdiction over these lands, and to subject it to rules promulgated by a separate agency, without knowledge of the particular mission and values of the Authority, may prove problematic.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Eben Sypitowski", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Eben Sypitowski
Park Director, Baxter State Park

“ TO PRESERVE AND PROTECT ”