



Maine Association of Conservation Districts

Working for Maine's Conservation Districts

PO Box 541 Portland, ME 04112

4/26/2021

Written Testimony in Support of LD 1549, An Act to Establish the Maine Forest Advisory Board

To: Senator Jim Dill, Representative Maggie O'Neil, and Honorable Members of the Committee on Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry:

Maine Association of Conservation Districts (MACD) fully supports LD NO. 1549, An Act to Establish the Maine Forest Advisory Board, and is pleased that a representative of Maine Soil and Water Conservation Districts is included as a member of the proposed Maine Forest Advisory Board to be appointed by the Speaker of the House.

With local insights, Maine's sixteen Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs) have expansive knowledge of the issues, concerns, interests, and benefits woodlot owners share. Maine SWCDs actively provide educational information, technical assistance, outreach, and workshops - often partnering with Federal, Local, Tribal, and State of Maine departments, agencies, and organizations, including the Maine Forest Service, Bureau of Parks and Lands, Maine Natural Areas Program, Maine Woodland Owners, University of Maine Cooperative Extension, The Nature Conservancy, Maine Audubon, and more – to address the challenges impacting woodlot owners.

Maine's SWCDs are uniquely placed to provide examples of different forest stewardship practices - in some cases through on-the-ground implementation as owners or managers of demonstration forests. Their examples of forestry best management practices must focus on a variety of forest uses, from forest management plans and timber harvest to soil health and public recreation opportunities.

Establishment of the Maine Forest Advisory Board will provide a broad-based view of forest conditions, priorities, trends, and threats which will inform and advise the Committee of Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry on a wide range of issues and from a variety of perspectives.

Maine Association of Conservation Districts is pleased to support the Act to Establish the Maine Forest Advisory Board.

On behalf of the Maine Association of Conservation Districts Executive Committee,

Carol Weymouth, Executive Director,
Maine Association of Conservation Districts