

Sarah Trites
Sabattus
LD 988

Dear Senator Ingwersen, Representative Pluecker, and Members of the Committee on Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry,

I am writing to express my strong support for the bill LD 988 titled "Resolve, Directing the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry to Conduct an Accessibility Study of All Maine State Parks and Historic Sites and to Develop a Plan to Remove Access Barriers."

As a person with a disability who uses a wheelchair, I know firsthand the challenges that arise when trying to access outdoor recreational spaces. Often there is not a flat pathway to picnic areas and sites of interest. Picnic tables often have benches on both sides. I am not able to pull up to the table with my wheelchair. The trails leading to scenic destinations are often too uneven and bumpy to use with a wheelchair. This is very limiting for me, and frustrating when trying to plan an outing with family members. One trail leading to a scenic view in some parks would be such a big improvement and give people with limited mobility an opportunity to enjoy the outdoors with their families.

I believe that universal design works for everyone and that by making Maine's state parks more accessible, we can ensure that everyone has the opportunity to experience the natural beauty of our state. This bill would be an important step in that direction by directing the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry to conduct an accessibility study of Maine's state parks and historic sites and develop a plan to remove access barriers.

I urge you to support this bill and help make Maine's state parks and historic sites accessible to all. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Sarah Trites