

Testimony of Ben Gilman for The Maine State Chamber of Commerce In Opposition To  
LD 489, RESOLUTION, Proposing an Amendment to the Constitution of Maine To Establish a  
Right to a Healthy Environment

March 8, 2021

Senator Brenner, Representative Tucker, members of the Joint Standing Committee on Environment and Natural Resources, my name is Ben Gilman from Gorham and I represent the Maine State Chamber of Commerce, a statewide business organization made up of both large and small businesses, here to provide you with our written testimony in opposition to L.D. 489, RESOLUTION, Proposing an Amendment to the Constitution of Maine To Establish a Right to a Healthy Environment

Maine businesses are committed to protecting our environment. In compiling *Making Maine Work*, we surveyed businesses across the state and according to those businesses, "Maine's two greatest economic development assets are its quality of life and its quality of place." Our quality of life is measured in large part by the state's natural resources and its physical beauty. Maintaining the pristine nature of our surroundings is vitally important to continuing to attract more businesses. Maine has one of the most pristine and cleanest environments not only in our country but the world. The State of Maine has done a great job in protecting our environment and the Maine State Chamber of Commerce believes the current regulatory structure in place is the correct one and a constitutional amendment is not necessary and could potentially lead to unintended consequences.

By enshrining environmental protections in the constitution and elevating them above the current statutory framework this would lead to one outcome – a more litigious regulatory environment at the local and state level. We would pose the question – is there a problem not being addressed? All one needs to do is to look out the window and see that protecting our environment in Maine is everyone's priority and the State of Maine, specifically the Maine Legislature has done a great job and has been responsive to people of Maine. Our clean water and air prove this. We believe we need to continue to be vigilant and proactive in protecting our environment, but a constitutional amendment is not necessary and could have unintended consequences.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide you with our written testimony.

