

5/3/2021

Written Testimony By James L. Robbins In Opposition
To LD 1532

Chairlady Brenner, chairman Tucker and members of the Environmental and Natural Resources Committee. My name is James L. Robbins. I am a former owner and president of Robbins Lumber in Searsmont, Maine, which is now owned and operated by my three children. They also own and operate Georges River Energy, an 8.5 megawatt biomass CHP power plant. We presently employ 138 men and women.

This bill proposes to fine any organization that exceeds its allowable emissions \$25,000-\$100,000 per day which is a terrible threat to any such operating business. Unexpected occurrences can occur no matter how hard businesses try to control and keep their emissions legal. For example, a gauge measuring those emissions could malfunction without the operator being aware of it. If this occurred for a week, and a state inspector caught it, a fine could be imposed on that business from \$175,000 to \$700,000 even if it was only slightly over their emissions.

This bill creates a very antibusiness climate for the state of Maine. I am very active in an organization called For/Maine. The purpose of For/Maine is to try to attract new businesses to Maine to replace the thousands of jobs lost in the paper industry a few years

ago. If this bill passes it will make it extremely difficult to attract any new manufacturers to Maine.

This bill creates redundancy in our emission laws and adds tremendously to the cost of running a mill or power plant.

In Finland, many towns are powered and heated by biomass CHP plants located in the center of their villages and cities. We could, and should, be doing the same thing here in Maine but this bill would make it impossible to do so.

Our mill and power plant site covers 40 acres.

Monitoring air emissions all around our boundary would be extremely expensive and probably impossible to do. Emissions should be measured at the stack as they are now.

Requiring sending notice to anyone living within five miles of an emitting stack will be very time consuming, burdensome and expensive- especially if the organization is located near a heavily populated area. More frequent licensing will add tremendous expense to an already very expensive process. This will have far reaching detrimental affects on not only businesses but also public facilities like schools, hospitals and other organizations.

This bill sends a strong message to the rest of the world that you aren't welcome here. I hope you will all vote against this burdensome anti- business bill.

Thank you.

James L. Robbins

Searsmont, Maine, 04973

