

Celeste Carey
Newcastle
LD 928

Celeste Carey
Newcastle, ME

Senator Chair Brenner, Representative Chair Gramlich, and members of the Environment and Natural Resources Committee, I am writing as a Maine citizen in support of L.D. 928, the "RESOLUTION, Proposing an Amendment to the Constitution of Maine to Establish a Right to a Clean and Healthy Environment."

If we want a climate we humans can continue to thrive in, we will need to be proactive about this. Green Amendments like The Pine Tree Amendment, as this resolution is called, provides us that opportunity.

Of course, when you look at the latest U.N. Report on global warming, "thriving" is a somewhat relative term. We could have been doing better. Two of Maine's greatly significant environmental news stories focus on PFAS – the forever chemicals – and the movement of our lobster populations toward colder waters. We have polluted our soil, some of it farming soil. The Gulf of Maine is getting too warm, too full of micro-plastics, and too acidic. Restoration ecology¹ is not a perfect practice of science, nor is it conservation; we won't be going back exactly to where we once were environmentally.

Our natural resources here in Maine, Vacationland, are at risk. Industrial-sized businesses are over-running municipalities' interests, municipalities' Home Rule rights. This was noted in last week's Marine Resources Committee's public hearing testimony on a bill to protect Maine fisheries from the effects of industrial recirculating aquaculture operations. Towns were looking for reasonable regulations so to defend themselves. They weren't finding help where they had expected it and Home Rule rights did not matter enough. The goal of supporting small scale marine harvesting may be losing out.

Then there is our wildlife. "At least 18 native species of wildlife are known to have become extinct historically within Maine's borders, including nine insect species (1 beetle and 8 butterflies and moths)," according to the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife. We have endangered species and threatened species. You probably know about the Atlantic Puffin being endangered here. I couldn't tell you about most of our fauna, though I easily take note of the bob cat that on rare occasion visits right up to the house. One time it was winter and the snow was coming down. The cat stared at me and I back at him. Perhaps the cat thought I should be part of its food chain. I just never saw such up close beauty here at home.

I hope you vote for the Pine Tree Amendment so other generations can have such magic moments as I have with the bob cat.

Thank you.

Celeste Carey
Newcastle

1. Smithsonian Restoration Ecology

<https://serc.si.edu/research/research-topics/biodiversity-conservation/restoration-ecology>