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**Weyerhaeuser Testimony in Opposition to LD 928 “RESOLUTION, Proposing an Amendment to the Constitution of Maine to Establish a Right to a Clean and Healthy Environment”**

Senator Brenner, Representative Gramlich and members of the Committee On Environment and Natural Resources;

Weyerhaeuser owns and sustainably manages over 840,000 acres of timberland in Maine. Our timberlands are third party certified to the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) standards and support healthy wildlife habitat, clean water, and the capture and storage of carbon, while providing abundant opportunities for outdoor recreation. We are proud to be part of the forest industry supply chain in Maine which contributes over \$8 billion annually to Maine’s economy.

Weyerhaeuser is concerned about the negative impact that LD 928 could lead to for our natural resource industries in Maine.

As a natural resource sector, forest landowners, loggers, and forest products manufacturers in Maine arguably do more than any other sector to protect and enhance the health of our environment which we all cherish. Our working forests provide essential wildlife habitat, remove carbon from the atmosphere and store it in trees and long lived forest products, and protect sensitive ecosystems and clean air and water.

LD 928 aims to amend the constitution in a way that is likely to subject landowners to ongoing court actions in response to silviculture or harvesting practices occurring on private property in accordance with the law and local ordinances. Any person who is unsatisfied with environmental laws or permits would be able to challenge the State or a municipality in court to adopt laws, ordinances or permits that more strictly regulate or ban activities. The amendment would give any person, or group or persons, the right to file court actions to change lawful agency or municipal decisions.

One needs to look no further than how the National Environmental Policy Act process has been used on US Forest Service land by those opposed to cutting trees and certain forms of recreation to see how lawsuits can be used to halt logging activities and ban uses. Far from giving Mainer’s more say on environmental issues, this law will transfer decisions about environmental protection from elected state and municipal officials to an appointed judge.

Weyerhaeuser respectfully urges this Committee to vote “ought not to pass” on LD 928.

Sincerely,

*Chris Fife*