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*Testimony of Rep. Paige Zeigler in support of*

## **LD 1202, An Act To Establish a Wood-fired Combined Heat and Power Program**

*Before the Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology*

Senator Lawrence, Representative Berry and fellow members of Energy, Utilities and Technology Committee, I am Representative Stanley Paige Zeigler and I represent House District 96, which includes Belmont, Liberty, Lincolnville, Montville, Morrill, Palermo and Searsmont. I'm here in support of **LD 1202, An Act To Establish a Wood-fired Combined Heat and Power Program.**

I feel that if we are going to use biomass as an energy source then co-generation is the approach that makes the most sense. In the 1970s, I worked as a logger for Georgia-Pacific in their different camps along the Canadian border. During a layoff period, I worked for a short period in a sawmill in Searsmont, but not in Mr. Robbins's sawmill, who I know is also testifying today. A tremendous amount of chips and end pieces were produced daily, which then had to be disposed of. Now, with a combined heat and power plant, there is another use for these chips when they cannot be sold elsewhere.

Mr. Robbins, who I met at the University of Maine at the Composite Lab five years ago, invited me to visit their sawmill to see their co-generation project. The waste that they are producing is a byproduct of sawing timber. The energy used to fell, transport and then saw timber produces the waste, which can then be used to power the saws and heat the kiln. This reduces the amount of energy that must be imported by the sawmill.

I was impressed with Mr. Robbins co-generation project. He is looking at new methods of structural wood and sees a future in our forests that is not attempting to hold on to past methods that may no longer serve us well. We need to be stewards of our woodlands and utilize our resources in the best possible projects. We also need to take steps to support our heritage industries when we can, and I see the establishment of a wood-fired combined heat and power program as good for creating jobs here in Maine and beneficial to our forest products industry.

Thank you for your time. I'm happy to answer any questions you have of me.