

Scott Beal  
Woodland Pulp LLC  
LD 2077

Good afternoon Senator Lawrence, Representative Zeigler and members of the Energy, Utilities and Technology Committee.

I'm Scott Beal, a recent retiree of Woodland Pulp LLC in Baileyville where I worked for 44 years. I now work as a contractor for Woodland Pulp. It's in this capacity that I submit testimony on Woodland Pulp's behalf in opposition to LD-2077—An Act Regarding Customer Costs and the Environmental and Health Effects of Natural Gas.

In our view, Natural Gas should be leveraged to a greater extent in our state to displace fuel oil as opposed to limiting it's availability. This bill seeks to limit customer costs, which sounds like a noble pursuit. However, in so doing, it places the State's natural gas companies in a precarious position going forward. This bill seeks to prohibit their potential for future expansion and growth. Simply stated, in the business world, this is often a recipe for extinction. This bill also sends a terrible message to the natural gas companies that have invested in Maine and without a doubt, planning additional investments.

In 2011, Woodland Pulp embarked on what would become a capital investment of over \$15,000,000 to facilitate a natural gas line connection to the Maritimes & Northeast Pipeline in order to convert the mill's sources from residual oil. The environmental (let alone the economic) benefits of this fuel switching endeavor has been significant. (The environmental benefits can be confirmed from our past Chapter 137 Annual Air Emission reports that are on file with the ME DEP's Air Bureau.)

If this legislation was law back then, it's not unreasonable to question if this critical fuel switching project would have come to pass.

Natural gas, without question, provides an important part of Maine's energy portfolio now but perhaps more importantly, for the foreseeable future.

Maine shouldn't be choosing winners and losers with the energy suppliers and developers doing business in the state, particularly in the vacuum this bill resides.

In closing, I ask that you report this bill out of committee ONTP.

Thank you for the opportunity to consider our position on this legislation.

Respectfully submitted,

Scott Beal  
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On Behalf of Woodland Pulp LLC