



BACKCOUNTRY
HUNTERS & ANGLERS
NEW ENGLAND

April 13, 2025

Committee on Inland Fisheries and Wildlife
c/o Legislative Information Office
100 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333

Re: Testimony neither for nor against LD 1308 Resolve, Directing the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife to Establish a Working Group to Explore Opportunities to Maintain Public Access of Land

As a volunteer leader representing the Maine members of New England Chapter of Backcountry Hunters and Anglers I am neither for nor against LD 1308 Resolve, *Directing the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife to Establish a Working Group to Explore Opportunities to Maintain Public Access of Land*. Backcountry Hunters and Anglers is a nationwide organization that advocates for access & opportunities for hunters and anglers, as well as the conservation and sound management of wildlife and wildlife habitat.

In Maine roughly 94% of Maine's forest lands are privately owned, the tradition of public access to commercial owned forest is critical to sustaining our hunting and fishing heritage. Many of our treasured recreational resources such as vast forestlands, important waterways (West Branch of Penobscot, Allagash Wilderness Waterway etc.) and State Heritage Fish waters, are accessed by roads and bridges maintained by commercial forest landowners. We believe it is crucial to keep an open dialog with these landowners, the access they provide is extremely important to Maine's Sporting Heritage.

We wish to publicly thank landowners who allow public access. We also want to thank the sponsors of this bill and the committee for an opportunity to have this important conversation. We would welcome the opportunity to have further conversations in a working group or in other forums.

Sincerely,

John C Simoneau

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