

February 14,2022

Good Morning,

My name is Kathy Shaw, I am a farmer in Auburn Maine, I have been a farmer for my entire adult life and have lived in and operated Valley View farm in Auburn since 2000. I stumbled upon my farm by happy accident and have appreciated and accepted the security ( AND LIMITATIONS) that the current zoning (in place and unchanged since the Mid 1960's) has offered.

Six years ago, our city leadership initiated an exhaustive campaign to upend our Agricultural Resource Protection Zone through city council hearings, planning board review, Strip Zoning proposals and now,here, at the state level. And, now I hear that there will be yet another city council/ planning board action in the coming months.

Our current zoning was modified in 2018 and the income requirement was reduced to a lower level. ( 30% of the median Maine income)

Now, more than ever, we need to find ways to help feed our Maine residents in a sustainable manner. If this bill actually offered a plan to allow affordable farm dwellings or helped to create more small sustainable farms, I would be very glad to encourage and support such an effort.

However, as written,this bill will only

serve to eliminate local zoning control, and given the current frenzied state of real estate developement these 18,000 acres would be soon broken into house lots of 5.5 acres and sold to the highest bidders.

In the past year, I have received three letters from California land speculators, all three offering substantially lower purchase offers than what my land is currently valued at. Coincidence? I think not, and I know of 4 others that have received offers quite similar to mine. There are no restrictions to the sale of these lands. No one is being forced to hold onto these acres. And without a doubt, some folks will want to sell when they see the value of their land rise dramatically.

How do we go about preserving this land of dwindling resources for future generations to work and enjoy? It has been a question that many of us have wrestled with over the past few years...and I am confident that we will find a solution.

And so, are we Racist? Segregationalist? Elitist?

Again, our city leadership continues to hammer away at us with these hurtful and inflammatory statements. I know I am not, nor are my neighbors,fellow foresters,homesteaders,farmers. But what I do know is that unless we stand to protect this land and allow for **thoughtful development** ,once built upon, it will be gone forever and our fields and woodlands will become filled with upscale trendy homes and owners that will not want to be subjected to manure being spread on fields, tractor noises or roosters at 4 in the morning, chainsaws from woodlot harvesting,and any other farm related activities.

Please do not allow this bill to move forward , it is a bad misleadingly worded bill with INTENDED consequences that will affect our City and our state.

I appreciate your time and attention today, and welcome you to contact me if you have and further questions or thoughts,

Kathy Shaw  
Valley View Farm  
Auburn Maine