

Jack McKay
Bangor
LD 1724

Members of the Labor and Housing Committee,

My name is Jack McKay and I'm here as President of the Eastern Maine Labor Council and Director of Food AND Medicine. Both organizations strongly support the passage of LD 1724 for a number of reasons.

For decades we have heard from loggers who, as independent contractors, suffer due to an unbalanced playing field. Typically with large capital outlays, loggers are disadvantaged when negotiating with large landowners such as Irving. Worse still, American loggers suffer from unfair competition from Canadian loggers.

The only current path for redress is a lawsuit, which is a time consuming and expensive ordeal. It also invites the logger to be blacklisted, an unfortunately yet very real threat to their whole way of life.

The dispute panel is set up in a fair way with one member recommended by the landowners, one by the Maine AFL-CIO and one neutral member. Frivolous complaints will be weeded out due to the fact that costs will be paid by the losing party.

As independent contractors, loggers lose labor law protection that employees have, however weak they may be. This measure would be a small, yet significant step in making a more balanced playing field,

Thank you,

Jack McKay,
President of the Eastern Maine Labor Council
Director of Food AND Medicine