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Good morning Senator , Representative , and members of the Veterans and Legal Affairs Committee. I'm Carolyn Silvius from Portland, and I wish to speak in favor of LD194 which would prohibit foreign owned government corporations from influencing referenda by their contributions. We as a country and as a state have the right to self government. No foreign entity should have the ability to dictate how we govern ourselves. However, we recognize that money generates power and influence, so by allowing foreign governments to use their PACs to influence our legislative decisions, we are essentially allowing these foreign governments to govern us.

Specifically, this bill was brought to attention by LD471 which I will be addressing on Thursday, but generally it influences any legislation in which a foreign government may find an interest.

HQ is a corporation solely owned by the province of Quebec. They have already demonstrated their disregard for our laws by pleading guilty to spending \$100,000 to influence Maine voters last year, before registering as a Political Action Committee. For this violation, they were assessed a \$35,000 fine, which was the second largest campaign violation fine in our State's history. It seems they didn't learn much from that episode, because here they are again spending millions to influence the establishment of the CMP corridor. Federal law (and also Canadian law by the way) already prohibits this foreign influence, but the way Maine law was written, established a loophole that HQ has exploited. In this instance it's Canada, a friendly country, an ally. But if this loophole isn't fixed immediately, any country could have its way with our legislation. Please vote in favor of LD194 and allow us to be truly self governing.