

February 6, 2023

Senator Craig Hickman
Chair, Joint Standing Committee on Veteran and Legal Affairs
Maine State Senate
Augusta, Maine 04330

Subject: LD230 - Resolve, to Require the Maine National Guard to Sell Certain Property in Hallowell

Honorable Senator Hickman and Committee Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on LD230. I am in favor of the transfer of ownership of an approximately 7 acre lot from the Maine National Guard to the City of Hallowell. I am aware that several of my constituents will be addressing the recreational and environmental benefits of the property. I would like to address the financial aspect of LD230.

I am Maureen AuCoin and I serve as President of the Hallowell City Council. One of my roles on this Council is to Chair the Finance Committee. Later today we will be meeting to begin our annual budget process. Each year we are faced with a list of expenditures that far outweigh our anticipated revenues. In the past decade and a half, we have seen our mil rate nearly double in Hallowell. We are faced with difficult decisions each year about priorities. For example, we need to finance a long overdue new facility for our Publics Works department, replace costly essential equipment, and provide adequate wages for our employees. In a small community of 2500 residents, the property owners feel the burden of the smallest additional expenditure. An additional \$80,000 for land acquisition is simply not a viable expenditure to impose on our tax payers.

These residents have been using this property for hiking, biking, birding, dog walking, snowshoeing, etc. for many decades. If it hadn't been for the recent boundary survey, the majority of us would still be under the assumption that it was City owned property. As elected officials, whether on the State level or the local level, we strive to make decisions that benefit our community. This property is a benefit to our community. Let's work together on this one. I respectfully request that you approve the transfer of this property to the City of Hallowell for a sale price not to exceed one dollar.

Respectfully submitted,

Maureen AuCoin
Hallowell City Council, President

Maureen AuCoin
City of Hallowell
LD 230

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