



Maine Forest Products Council

The voice of Maine's forest economy

Testimony in Opposition to LD 53

“An Act to Ensure Accountability for Workplace Harassment and Assault by Removing Intentional Acts and Omissions from Workers’ Compensation Exemptions”

February 16, 2023

Patrick Strauch, Executive Director

Senator Tipping, Representative Roeder and members of the Committee on Labor and Housing, the following is testimony submitted on behalf of the Maine forest Products Council in opposition to LD 53, “An Act to Ensure Accountability for Workplace Harassment and Assault by Removing Intentional Acts and Omissions from Workers’ Compensation Exemptions.”

The workers’ compensation program works because it strikes a balance between the rights and interests of employers and employees. As drafted, LD 53 would upset that balance. Payment of workers’ compensation benefits to an employee injured at work shield the employer from further liability. This bill removes the exemption from lawsuits against employers for injuries to employees in the workplace that are caused by an intentional act or omission, disrupting the whole purpose of the workers’ compensation system – benefits paid without lawsuits in exchange for protection from further liability.

In addition, the employer may not be at fault for the intentional act or omission, so this bill would open them up to be sued for something that they did not do.

If passed, this bill would open Maine employers of all sizes up to significant, unavoidable litigation costs, making Maine a hostile place to do business. For that reason, the Council opposes LD 53. We must keep an equitable, predictable balance between employers and workers, or the system simply won’t work.

Thank you for your consideration.

Companies represented on the MFPC Board

A & A Brochu Logging
American Forest Mgmt.
Baskahegan Co.
BBC Land, LLC
Columbia Forest Prod.
Cross Insurance
Family Forestry
Farm Credit East
Fontaine Inc.
H.C. Haynes
Huber Resources
INRS
J.D. Irving
Katahdin Forest Mgmt.
Key Bank
Kennebec Lumber
LandVest Inc.
Louisiana Pacific
Maibec Logging
ND Paper
Nicols Brothers
Pingree Associates
Prentiss & Carlisle
ReEnergy
Richard Wing & Son
Robbins Lumber
Sappi North America
Southern Maine Forestry
Stead Timberlands
St. Croix Tissue
St. Croix Chipping
TD Bank
Timber Resource Group
Timberstate G.
Wadsworth Woodlands
Wagner Forest Mgt.
Weyerhaeuser
Woodland Pulp