



Maine Forest Products Council

The voice of Maine's forest economy

Testimony in Support of LD 881

“Resolve, Directing the University of Maine System to Study the Development of a Course Regarding the Use of Manufactured Wood Products”

March 15, 2023

Patrick Strauch, Executive Director

Senator Rafferty, Representative Brennan and members of the Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs, my name is Patrick Strauch and I am here on behalf of the Maine Forest Products Council in support of LD 881, “Resolve, Directing the University of Maine System to Study the Development of a Course Regarding the Use of Manufactured Wood Products.”

We understand, from our conversations with Representative Samuel Zager, that this bill may be significantly amended to direct the University of Maine System to study any barriers that may exist that are holding back the cross laminated timber (CLT) sector of the forest products industry. This study would be conducted within available resources for a presentation to the Second Regular Session of the 131st Legislature.

Through our involvement with the FOR/Maine initiative, the Maine Forest Products Council has been involved with efforts to develop markets and capacity for CLT in Maine for several years because we see it as a beneficial value-added product that could help diversify our industry and provide resiliency here in the state. Through this lens, we would like to thank Rep. Zager for his advocacy and lend our full support to LD 881.

The use of CLT for the construction of buildings up to 25 stories tall has been increasing around the world and in other areas of the country as a replacement for carbon-intensive materials such as concrete and steel. In addition to its superior strength and fire resist properties, CLT is a renewable resource that sequesters carbon. It is also aesthetically pleasing, making this product increasingly popular. Now is an ideal time to support this budding industry.

CLT is also gaining attention in Maine as well, with projects underway or built at Bowdoin, the University of Southern Maine, the University of New England, the University of Maine, College of the Atlantic, Portland Museum of Art and others. While highlighting this innovative green building material, these projects are also helping to establish a demand for the product, which is necessary to attract a potential manufacturer to our state. LD 881 would be complimentary to this movement by identifying barriers that must be overcome to achieve this goal.

The potential demand for CLT in the northeast is significant, and the potential for a CLT manufacturer to co-locate with an existing sawmill to take advantage of co-efficiencies also provides promise. For these reasons, we urge you to vote in favor of LD 881.

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
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LandVest Inc.
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Maibec Logging
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Nicols Brothers
Pingree Associates
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ReEnergy
Richard Wing & Son
Robbins Lumber
Sappi North America
Southern Maine Forestry
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