

Statement by Corky Ellis, Chairman and Founder of Kepware

My name is Corky Ellis, I'm the founder and Chairman of Kepware, a software company in Portland that supplies software to help automate manufacturing throughout the world. 35% of our sales are overseas, and we have 50 employees at our headquarters in Portland. We are growing fast, and would welcome you to visit our facility when we move into our new expanded space in two months.

In 1995, I was running our company in New Jersey, manufacturing gauges and meters for pressure and temperature measurement. We had two young children, and we spent our summers always driving through Maine to go across the airline to St. Andrews, New Brunswick.

One year, I looked at my wife and said, "Wouldn't you like to live in Maine?" New Jersey had become so developed, with endless malls, billboards, parking lots, dirty air, and a real loss of its natural beauty. She said, "Sure, let's try it." So we piled into a van, moved for an experimental year, to Cumberland.

Of course, once we got here, there was no chance we were going back. In 1995, we started a software company, and for the first five years, it was a disaster, losing all of our savings. Then we got lucky, made some good decisions, and now we are a flourishing enterprise.

We moved to Maine from New Jersey, and started a business here, for one reason. We wanted to live here. It is beautiful, the water is clean, the development is done thoughtfully and carefully. We could have moved to North Carolina, Tennessee, or Texas, with its lower taxes, and minimal environmental regulations.

But we wanted to live here, because it is a wonderful place that has tried hard to find a middle ground between no holds barred development and impractical resistance to economic growth. Maine is unique, and it will attract businesses, but not if sacrifice the uniqueness that we have. I think that regulation must be fine tuned, made more effective.

I pray that you don't go too far, and **gut** those environmental regulations that ensure our clean water, sensible development, and preserve the beauty which makes Maine the kind of place that a family like ours left New Jersey for. Please be thoughtful, and careful, and judicious in your decision about our environment.

Thank you.

Remarks at "Maine People and the Environment" roundtable with Governor LePage

January 20, 2011 at the Augusta Civic Center

Event sponsored by the Natural Resources Council of Maine www.nrcm.org