

Harry Dwyer

Thank you Governor for being here. I appreciate your being here. As you've heard, Maine's natural resources are the backbone of our economy, and it's not just a pretty landscape, it's a working landscape. I have made my living for the most part over the last 30 years by cutting down trees. I know there's been a lot of talk about regulations that are now more complex than they used to be taking more time and so forth, but I think one reason for that is that we now know a lot more than we used to about how complex things are. It's not as simple as we used to think and it makes me think of a story from when I was starting out over 30 years ago when LURC traced a giant plume of mud up a river system to a logging job and went to the job and told the people there that they had a problem. The river was brown with mud. People said, "Okay, what's the problem?" LURC said, "You have a plume of mud in the river we can see from satellites." They said again, "You told us that, but what's the problem?"

Well, I don't think anyone today on any job anywhere would say, "What's the problem?" We've come a long way. We've learned a lot, and we've improved our practices. But I think regulation has necessarily had to expand and is a little more complex as we've expanded our knowledge of how these things work. Otherwise we can't truly protect sustainability. And even though I am in business and not the biggest fan of regulation, I think we should be very careful about stepping backwards and deregulating. I deal with the impact of running a natural resource-based business in an area where development has often been done carelessly and no thought to future needs such as how you might get a pulp truck into a back lot. And building houses is important, people need a place to live, but I can't work in the woods if I don't have a woods there to work in, and neither could my son. I'd also point out that farms and forests being developed into house lots is often a money loser for the towns as well. There are studies that show that towns are healthier financially when they have lots of farm and forestlands as opposed to lots of single-family homes. As Yogi Berra said, "You could look that up."

So one thing I've learned in thirty years of running a business is you can do it right and still be profitable. Sustainable forest management does pay, and we need to continue to improve how we protect our natural resources. I want my son to have the opportunities that I've had, and we need the woods, the mills, the farms, the lakes – all of it have to be there for it to happen. There's one other important job for government involving regulation that I'd point out: I think government officials have a role like the umpires in a ball game. You're not on either team, you make sure the game is played by the rules and the playing field is level. Nothing puts a burr under my saddle more than to have to compete against people who cut corners, who don't care about the future or what the rules of the game are. I can't compete with that, and no one trying to do it right can compete with that.

So my take home message is this: regulations aren't perfect. Some may need fixing. But the regulations are not the enemy. They are an important tool in making sure sustainability is a part of how we do business today so that our children and

grandchildren also have opportunity in the future. We have to remember as we make our living that we have children and what we leave them for the future matters.

Thank you.

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