



TESTIMONY OF DON KLEINER
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR MAINE PROFESSIONAL GUIDES ASSOCIATION

Friday March 30, 2012

Opposing L.D. # 1853

An Act To Improve Environmental Oversight and Streamline Permitting for Mining in
Maine

Good afternoon Senator Saviello, Representative Hamper and distinguished members of the Environment and Natural Resources Committee. My name is Don Kleiner I live in Union and I am before you today representing the 900 members of the Maine Professional Guides Association. Each of whom represents a small independent business many in the rural and remote parts of our state.

Our businesses are completely dependent on natural resources be they fish, wildlife or clean water and specific resources are critical to some members. Our businesses are where the value of our natural resources is converted into economic activity. Some resources serve as the thing that makes individual businesses dramatically different from competitors around the world. For instance Maine retains the highest percentage of intact wild brook trout populations in the United States. Indeed Maine supports 97% of the nation's wild brook trout resources. In a similar way the states wildlife resources of clean water are critical to other member's success.

Any changes that might impact those resources represent a threat to the economic viability of our individual businesses. For example acid mine drainage, a consequence of some mining practices, poses a significant threat to aquatic resources, including fish. Mining industries and governments spend huge sums of money to prevent, mitigate, and remediate damage from acid discharges to surface and groundwater systems. Please be certain that we have those financial resources available for long after we and the mine are gone.

Because of the huge impact that changes in mining regulations could have on our natural resources and our businesses that rely on them, we think that there is a need for careful study, research, and public input to create a set of new regulations that addresses these concerns. Something that we do not believe you have had time for.

On behalf of the Maine Professional Guides Association, I urge you to act with caution when considering this piece of legislation. Making changes to mining regulations without taking enough time to review all of the consequences could lead to serious ecological and economic problems the areas near mines far into the future. Although we think that it is reasonable to reexamine and update current regulations, we feel that there has not been enough time for the careful deliberation required to produce legislation this important and urge you to simply vote ought not to pass.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak.