



LOCAL LODGE S-89
P.O. Box 481, Bath, Maine 04530

DISTRICT LODGE 4
INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF MACHINISTS & AEROSPACE WORKERS

Carol L. Sanborn, President
E-mail: csanborn61900@roadrunner.com
Cell: (207) 313-0043

4/29/19 Public Hearing

Testimony of Carol L. Sanborn, President IAMAW Local Lodge S-89 In support of LD 1459: "An Act to Expand Application of the Maine Agricultural Marketing and Bargaining Act of 1973 to Harvesters and Haulers of Forest Products."

Senator Bellows, Representative Sylvester, and members of the Committee:

I am a resident of Dresden, a paralegal, and President of Local S-89 of the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAM).

Current law specifically prohibits those who haul and harvest forest products from joining together to bargain over compensation for their work. We believe that workers should be free to discuss common work and economic situations. Permitting them this freedom is not giving them money, and does not guarantee successful negotiations. It simply would give them the ability to discuss the conditions of their employment. It would give them hope for the future. This bill would end the infringement of rights these workers have suffered for decades.

My grandfather was a logger for living back when they used horses and saws. My grandmother was the camp cook. They worked hard every single day of their lives and still died with virtually nothing to show for it. Economically, very little has changed for the loggers and haulers since those days. On the other hand, the fortunes of those for whom they work are now so exaggerated as to be visible to us all everywhere we go, and their names are known universally. There is much profit in holding power over workers; and those who have it will do and say anything to keep it.

Regardless of the industry, good-faith negotiation is seen as a negative only by those whose fortune is derived from the labor of others. Society and the economy benefit most when workers have more—more dignity, more opportunity, more incentive to continue. Opponents will tell us the sky will fall—they're pretty predictable that way—but it isn't true. The Irvings and others like them will continue to be very wealthy even if workers are able to earn enough money to keep their equipment running and have an extra hour to spend with their families. Even if this bill is passed the hardship in this industry will continue, but at least it will not be hardship without hope. Allowing harvesters and haulers of forest products to have collective bargaining rights like the rest of us is the right thing to do. I encourage you to vote "ought to pass."