



STATE OF MAINE  
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR  
1 STATE HOUSE STATION  
AUGUSTA, MAINE  
04333-0001

Paul R. LePage  
GOVERNOR

April 27, 2015

Senator Peter Edgecomb, Chair  
Representative Craig Hickman, Chair  
Members of the Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry Committee  
100 State House Station  
Augusta, ME 04333

Dear Chairman Edgecomb, Chairman Hickman and Members of the Committee,

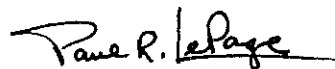
I am introducing legislation, again, this year to authorize the transfer of revenues from the increased harvest of timber on Bureau of Parks and Land lands to the Efficiency Maine Trust to assist rural Mainers with heating costs. This is a modest proposal to help those fellow Mainers who are most in need. Representative Timberlake will be sponsoring this bill, which I believe will be referred to your Committee. There are significant opportunities to lower energy costs through modern heating systems and increased efficiency. The Maine people own this land and they should benefit from increased timber revenue.

As you may be aware, I have recently stated that I am not releasing Land for Maine's Future bonds and will not approve current projects in the Land for Maine's Future "pipeline" until this timber harvest legislation is sent to my desk. I want to reiterate my position on this matter in order to be perfectly clear with the Committee and the Legislature as a whole. If the Legislature enacts this timber harvest legislation, then I will release the outstanding Land for Maine's Future bonds and I will approve the over thirty projects currently in the Land for Maine's Future "pipeline."

I continue to have concerns regarding the Land for Maine's Future Program as it relates to taking land off of Maine's tax rolls, keeping our working forests working and the lack of local participation in the decision-making process. By releasing these bonds and approving the projects in the pipeline, I am in no way relinquishing my right to scrutinize and reform this Program, so that future projects truly meet the needs of Mainers.

Thank you for your attention to this letter and I look forward to advancing this proposal.

Sincerely,

  
Paul R. LePage  
Governor



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