

November 15, 2021

Lynne Cayting, Chief
Mobile Sources Section
Bureau of Air Quality
Maine Department of Environmental Protection
17 State House Station
Augusta, ME. 04333

Re: Chapter 128, Advanced Clean Trucks Program, Rulemaking

Dear Ms. Cayting,

On behalf of the membership of the Professional Logging Contractors of Maine (PLC, I am writing to provide comments on the proposed Adoption of Chapter 128 rules that is currently open for rulemaking. Our organization is very concerned about the adoption of these proposed rules and the impact that it will have upon our industry. The forest products supply chain is worth an estimated \$8.1 billion to the Maine economy and our goal is to expand it to \$12.5 billion by 2025. However, we are very concerned that this growth will be put at risk if this rule is implemented.

For background, the PLC is a trade association that represents logging and associated trucking contractors throughout the state of Maine. The PLC was formed in 1995 to give independent contractors a voice in a rapidly changing forest industry. As of 2017, logging and trucking contractors in Maine employed over 3,900 people directly and were indirectly responsible for the creation of an additional 5,400 jobs. This employment and the investments that contractors make contributed \$620 million to the state's economy. The PLC membership, which includes 200 contractor members and an additional 100 associate members, employs over half of the individuals who work in this industry and is also responsible for 80% of Maine's annual timber harvest.

We understand and agree with the desire to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and air pollutants from on-road mobile sources in Maine. However, we believe that our industry has done a tremendous amount already to curb emissions with the full implementation of Tier IV trucks as mandated by Congress in 2014 and we cannot support the implementation of the California Advanced Clean Trucks (ACT) rule here in Maine because of the detrimental impact it will have upon our industry, an industry that works almost exclusively in remote areas of the state without access to any type of electrical infrastructure.

Our membership hauls and delivers raw forest products throughout the state from the forest to the mill. The vast majority of the product that our members haul is derived from remote forested areas of the state and is delivered by heavy duty trucks to other rural areas. These trucks generally operate in areas without access to electrical infrastructure, must be able to function 24 hours a day and must be reliable at all times of year, especially in the winter. This industry cannot be mandated to use Heavy Duty Zero Emission Vehicles in locations that lack all electrical infrastructure which could put the entire supply chain at risk.

Since 2014, the federal government has mandated all new logging and trucking equipment manufactured in the United States must meet the new Tier IV (zero emissions) specifications. This has lowered diesel emissions by 95%, but it has increased the cost of all new equipment and trucks by 30-40%. The cost paid for wood has not increased to accommodate the increased cost of investment. Additionally, there are absolutely no incentives to help minimize the financial impact that this change has had. Additionally, because of the law of unintended consequences, even if a

Tier II or Tier III truck is traded or sold as a result of the purchase of a Tier IV truck, that Tier II or Tier III machine/truck could be resold within the region or sent to another country that does not require Tier IV engines. What incentive is there for retailers/dealers to retire these older machines and how would Maine regulate it? In our mind Maine would then become an outlier, an exception rather than the rule, and its attempt at a climate beneficial practice could have terrible repercussions by creating even more problems in other areas of the country. We would suggest that if any change is going to occur, it should be at the federal level first before mandating it at the state level to ensure uniformity at all levels.

Margins in this industry are razor thin and it cannot be asked do even more without a significant incentive in place, electrical infrastructure that would need to be expanded to every road location in the state, including off road locations or an exemption for Heavy Duty trucks that operate in predominately rural areas. Further, we should not be asked to do even more when a blanket requirement for Tier IV or electrical vehicles has not been mandated on the largest producer of transportation emissions in this country, passenger vehicles.

In conclusion, I would ask you to seriously reconsider trying to implement this rule in the state of Maine. Our members cannot afford more government mandates especially after it is reeling from the explosion at the Jay mill and the impact of COVID 19. Our industry has done its share to curb emissions to pre-1990 levels from Heavy Duty trucks and we would ask that the rest of the transportation sector do the same before asking us to do any more.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on this rulemaking process. If you have any questions regarding our comments or if I can provide any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Dana A. Doran
Executive Director