

Testimony in opposition to H7243: State Forests and Forestry Projects

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Date of Hearing: April 14, 2026

To: Chair Abney and the Honorable Members of the House Finance Committee

Please oppose H7243. State resources are precious and should be used to yield results for the greatest needs. I believe additional DEM staff positions would better serve the public in the areas of compliance and enforcement. It often takes years to stop companies from polluting, creating dangerous situations in Providence port, etc. This bill is vague – what are ‘forestry projects’? Are these ‘projects’ ones that advantage the public’s good by conserving forest lands, or do they advantage those who wish to log more of our state’s woodlands? Logging should not be facilitated by DEM until they have mapped our forests for areas that should not be logged, i.e. mature growth, habitat for threatened species, etc. DEM has spent months creating a survey of species in need of greatest conservation and it is very thorough, but it does not denote exactly where all of these species are found on state land. This type of mapping would be another better use for additional DEM staff positions and that would be much applauded.