

September 14, 2023

Tim Carr
Land Use Planning Commission
22 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333

Dear Mr. Carr:

We are writing to request that the Land Use Planning Commission (LUPC) schedule an additional opportunity for Maine people to provide direct comments to the Commission regarding the Pickett Mountain Mine Rezoning Application (ZP 779A – Wolfden Mt. Chase, LLC).

Specifically, we request that the LUPC schedule a public comment session in the Bangor area on October 19th or during the following week, to help ensure that Maine people who are interested in this project of statewide significance have an accessible, affordable, and safe method for sharing their comments directly.

The LUPC currently has [scheduled two nights of public comment](#) sessions in Millinocket on the nights of October 16 and 17. For the following reasons, we believe this schedule is inadequate:

- **Statewide interest:** Wolfden’s Pickett Mountain mine proposal has statewide significance because it would be located near two of Maine’s most popular public lands, Baxter State Park and Katahdin Woods & Waters National Monument. The proposal also is located near three State Heritage Fish Waters and the headwaters of the West Branch of the Mattawamkeag River. The West Branch is within critical habitat for endangered Atlantic salmon and contains outstanding brook trout fisheries as well. People throughout Maine, and not just in the “project area”, have an interest in providing comments about any mining activity that would be located near these treasured natural resources that are valued by all the people of Maine.
- **Wabanaki Tribal interest:** The proposed Wolfen mine would be located in an area that holds important historical and cultural significance to Wabanaki people. The Mattawamkeag River is sacred to the Penobscot Indian Nation, which specifically requested that a public comment hearing be held closer to Indian Island due to limitations on transportation.
- **Cost and transportation burdens:** LUPC’s current limited public comment schedule would effectively discriminate against Maine people by imposing unreasonable expenses and transportation challenges. Interested parties who live in southern Maine might have to drive three or more hours to participate in a public hearing that could go well into the evening, then need to pay for lodging or drive home well past dark, raising safety concerns. The costs of gas, lodging, and food could easily exceed \$150 per person. These challenges discriminate against Maine residents without the money or time to travel to Millinocket, or who would be concerned about driving home after a late night in Millinocket.

For these reasons, we strongly request that the Commission schedule a public comment session in a location in Central Maine, such as the greater Bangor Area, that will be more accessible to all the people

of Maine who may be interested in sharing their views about this proposal directly with the LUPC. This is particularly important since it does not appear that a remote participation option will be provided.

We are not expressing a position on the substance or merits of Wolfden's application. Scheduling an additional, more accessible public comment session will be appreciated by Maine people who have thoughts to share from all points of view.

On behalf of our constituents, we appreciate your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Sen. Stacy Brenner (Scarborough)
Senate Chair, Environment and Natural Resources Committee

Rep. Lori Gramlich (Ocean Park)
House Chair, Environment and Natural Resources Committee; House District 131

Rachel Talbot Ross (Portland)
Speaker of the House, House District 118

Senator Donna Bailey
York County

Senator Pinny Beebe-Center
Knox County

Senator Anne Carney
Cumberland County

Senator Ben Chipman
Cumberland County

Senator Jill Duson
Cumberland County

Senator Nicole Grohoski
Hancock County

Senator Henry Ingwersen
York County

Senator David LaFountain
Kennebec County

Senator Joseph Rafferty
York County

Senator Peggy Rotundo
Androscoggin County

Senator Michael Tipping

Penobscot County

Representative Daniel Ankles (Brunswick)

House District 100

Representative Poppy Arford (Brunswick)

House District 101

Representative Arthur Bell (Yarmouth)

House District 103

Representative James Boyle (Gorham)

House District 109

Representative Mike Brennan (Portland)

House District 115

Representative Bill Bridgeo (Augusta)

House District 60

Representative Sally Jeane Cluchey (Bowdoinham)

House District 52

Representative Lynn Copeland (Saco)

House District 130

Representative Margaret Craven (Lewiston)

House District 93

Representative Deqa Dhalac (South Portland)

House District 120

Representative Janice Dodge (Belfast)

House District 39

Representative Vicki Doudera (Camden)

House District 41

Representative Valli Geiger (Rockland)

House District 42

Representative Cheryl Golek (Harpwell)

House District 99

Representative Anne Graham (North Yarmouth)

House District 105

Representative Allison Hepler (Woolwich)
House District 49

Representative Rebecca Jauch (Topsham)
House District 51

Representative Chris Kessler (South Portland)
House District 121

Representative Amy Kuhn (Falmouth)
House District 111

Representative Adam Lee (Auburn)
House District 89

Representative Grayson Lookner (Portland)
House District 113

Representative Marc Malon (Biddeford)
House District 133

Representative Rebecca Millett (South Portland)
House District 123

Representative Nina Milliken (Blue Hill)
House District 16

Representative Kelly Noonan Murphy (Scarborough)
House District 125

Representative Maggie O'Neil (Saco)
House District 129

Representative Laurie Osher (Orono)
House District 25

Representative Bill Pluecker (Warren)
House District 44

Representative Jane Pringle (Windham)
House District 107

Representative Lois Reckitt (South Portland)
House District 122

Representative Gerry Runte (York)
House District 146

Representative Daniel Sayre (Kennebunk)
House District 135

Representative Dan Shagoury (Hallowell)
House District 55

Representative Erin Sheehan (Biddeford)
House District 132

Representative Holly Stover (Boothbay)
House District 48

Representative Sophia Warren (Scarborough)
House District 124

Representative Bruce White (Waterville)
House District 65

Representative Lynne Williams (Bar Harbor)
House District 14

Representative Sam Zager (Portland)
House District 116

Representative Paige Zeigler (Montville)
House District 40