SPORTSMAN'S ALLIANCE of MAINE

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Chairman Bishop, Rep. Westerman and Rep. Poliquin, my name is David Trahan. I am the Executive Director of the 10,000-member Sportsman's Alliance of Maine (SAM). SAM is Maine's largest and most influential advocate for hunting, fishing, and outdoor recreation. Our members come from all parts of Maine, as well as other states. Thank you for the opportunity to address this committee, and this important issue.

It is SAM's mission to defend the rights of sportsmen and firearm owners. In addition, we promote the responsible conservation of our natural resources. On several occasions, including last year, we polled our members on whether they supported the creation of a National Park for the Katahdin region of Maine, as proposed by Roxanne Quimby. Each time the answer was a resounding NO, with our last poll at 92% opposition.

Land ownership in Maine is unique: 94% of our land is in private ownership, and forests cover over 90% (17.7 million acres) of the state, making Maine the most heavily forested state in the country. Maine has a long-standing tradition of allowing public access to private land, for hunting, fishing, snowmobiling, and wildlife viewing. It is particularly noteworthy that industrial timberland owners in the great north woods traditionally keep their lands open to recreational users. It is the rare exception when a large landowner, like Roxanne Quimby, denies reasonable access for outdoor recreation.

Through the generations Mainers have struck a delicate balance with landowners, sharing the land for all sorts of recreational uses, like hunting, fishing, trapping, and snowmobiling. Over time, large landowners have leased land and camps to outdoor recreationists, and as a result, thousands of camps have sprung up in the wilds of Maine. Families have invested tens, and, sometimes hundreds, of thousands of dollars building and maintaining these second homes. During these adventures into the Maine woods, moms, dads, grandfathers, uncles, aunts, and friends learned how to hunt, fish, camp, and conserve our natural resources, and in the process built bonds that made families stronger, and men and women better citizens.

The 12 million acres comprising the North Maine Woods are not all logging activity. Much of the land has been placed in various forms of conservation protections, on privately and publically-owned property. More than 3 million acres are protected from development using conservation easements. Other lands are being managed for multiple public values by land trusts. Still others are being conserved as natural areas. More than 300,000 acres of timberland are being managed as deer wintering habitat. And logging activity throughout the north woods is regulated by the Forest Practices Act of 1997. It is a mistake to believe that a National Park or National Monument is needed to preserve either the forest or access to it, anywhere in northern Maine.

In the last 100 years a great forest products industry grew from our renewable forest, which has provided billions of dollars in economic activity and thousands of good jobs. Rugged men and women learned to live with, and love, our magnificent natural resources. Unfortunately, that delicate balance between landowners and Mainers was threatened in the early 1990s when the radical group Restore the North Woods appeared on the scene. They proposed abandoning traditional recreation like hunting, snowmobiling, and other motorized recreation, as well as ending logging. Instead, they proposed creating a 3.2-million acre wilderness National Park surrounding Baxter State Park. The opposition to this attempt to place northern Maine in federal ownership was swift, and overwhelming. No Maine congressional delegation or Governor has ever supported the idea, and Restore was run out of the Katahdin region. There has been no feasibility study nor legislation introduced to establish this behemoth of a park. However, in the aftermath, Restore did not go away; they merely changed tactics, beginning about 2004.

With Restore's wilderness park idea crushed, Restore board member Roxanne Quimby took on the role of National Park advocate. A self-made multi-millionaire, she launched a plan to personally acquire land and then donate that acreage to become the seed of a wilderness National Park. Beginning in 2004, Quimby used her millions to begin assembling the land to build the wilderness park. Unfortunately, she used a meat cleaver to hack her way through the region.

As Quimby purchased large tracts of land, she gated once accessible roads, not just to her land, but access roads that when gated created landlocked parcels that she then could buy on the cheap. Her treatment of lease holders was even more hostile. This is an excerpt from the book, *Queen Bee: Burt's Bees, and Her Quest for a New National Park*, in the chapter titled "Elliotsville Purchases": "Roxanne didn't require lessees to vacate, but most were informed that their annual leases would increase from $600 to $1,500 after one year - similar to rates elsewhere in Maine - and that hunting, trapping, and the use of motorized vehicles would be prohibited. Most camp owners chose not to renew their leases after the initial year, and their vacated buildings were burned. One lessee, Michael Weymouth of Boston was allowed to stay on, perhaps as her eyes and ears in the area. An artist, photographer, and poet, Weymouth was sympatico with Roxanne as a lover of the natural world. He offered to let other writers, photographers, and artists use the camp when he wasn't there."

On May 22, 2008, the *Bangor Daily News* reported that camp lease holder Muriel Fortier, age 92, would spend her last days on the Penobscot River. Quimby, the new landowner who held Fortier's lease, would not renew it, and told Fortier that she must leave within a year. Muriel responded, "I am heartbroken. I have been living off the land and alone for the last 15-18 years ,and it's been my lifeline up there."

Finally, on Oct. 7, 2011, Quimby's legacy with Mainers was sealed when in an interview with the *Bangor Daily News* she called Maine, "a welfare state" that "has a large population of obese and elderly people, and whose major landowners are committed to a forest products industry model that hasn't worked in years."

With her National Park public relations campaign in shambles, Quimby turned the reins of the campaign over to her son, Lucas St. Claire. Using her vast wealth, and the Quimby Family Foundation, St. Claire and his mother have made countless donations to organizations and likely park supporters, including: the Natural Resources Council of Maine, the Maine Audubon Society, the Sierra Club, and many others. Quimby has promised huge donations ($40 million) to the National Park Foundation, and funded friendly politicians and at least one prominent Maine outdoor writer. At the same time, she ignored lopsided votes from all the communities in the affected region that remain in opposition to the National Park proposal. I am proud to say that SAM has never taken a dime from Quimby, and our organization has opposed her National Park scheme from Day One!

In addition to spreading money around, Quimby has worked outside of the normal National Park designation process. Studies of the park that claim 500 new jobs will be created were paid for by her, not Congress. Those who say this land is park-worthy are either paid to say so, sympathetic politicians, or the pro-park press. None of them are experts in such matters, just products of a well-funded public relations campaign produced by Quimby's Washington D.C. consultants.

Lastly, SAM does not believe for a moment that Roxanne Quimby or Restore the North Woods have deviated from their original plans. We do not believe the land will remain an 87,000-acre National Monument for long. Instead, we believe the National Park Service will transition this land to National Park status as soon as it becomes politically feasible. This National Park will then quickly grow like a cancer, gobbling up the region's land, and destroying its history as a working forest with unfettered access to traditional outdoor recreation. Given that Quimby has bought and donated land to Acadia National Park and other National Parks around the country, we believe she intends to use her money and Park-friendly landowners around Baxter State Park to immediately begin growing the National Monument to what she and Restore really want: a 3.2-million acre wilderness park.

Consistent with Quimby's and Restore's philosophy, once established, this park is really designed to exclude, not welcome people. To quote Restore's 2014 online brochure: "As we enter the new millennium, we have an extraordinary opportunity to save, for all time, the largest remaining wilderness east of the Rockies." Unlike Acadia National Park,

Quimby and Restore envision few roads in their proposed park. That was the plan that Restore presented to Mainers in the 1990s, and it will likely be stated in the property deeds Quimby presents to President Obama in the near future.

In the early 1990s, Roxanne Quimby and her friends at Restore began a takeover of the land and the culture of the Millinocket region. Using her money to buy political influence, she steamrollered over camp owners, sportsmen, and traditional land users, and in the process stamped out generations of local Mainers' memories and traditions. Nationally, Quimby bought her way onto the prestigious National Park Foundation Board of Directors. What better way to politically wrangle her way to a National Park designation? Clearly, the designation of a National Monument by Executive Order by President Obama will be viewed as cynical end-run around Congress and the people of northern Maine. We hope those politicians who support this maneuver will ultimately pay a political price for their collusion.

If Quimby is successful, she will impose her vision of quaint art galleries and benign sightseers mostly from urban cities like Portland to be forced down the throats of rural Mainers**.** What happens if her vision and social experiment fails, and American citizens refuse to travel past our already established magnificent National Parks to visit what I would argue is cutover average industrial forest? Who will hold her son and supporters accountable to the promises of jobs and prosperity?

I believe President Obama and park supporters have made their political deal with Roxanne Quimby, and hence, the National Monument designation is imminent. When that day comes, the President, Senator Angus King, and all those who will trumpet this designation as a victory must also accept the legacy that they enabled this injustice to happen.

SAM Steadfastly opposes the designation of any land in the Maine's north woods as a Katahdin Woods National Monument, National Park, or National Recreation Area. Any such designation will diminish the working forest and its strategically important timber resources. It will also deprive hunters, fishermen, snowmobilers, and other outdoor enthusiasts much-needed recreational access. Diminishing this access also diminishes the economic potential of northern Maine. Maine and the nation do not need a National Park in our north woods.