

# Senate Democrats continue fight against foreign labor

AUGUSTA —Members of the Senate voted down LD 314 on April 12. The bill, sponsored by Sen. Troy Jackson, would have eliminated an existing tax break incentive to forest owners who hire foreign labor over Maine workers.

During a vigorous floor debate, Sen. Jackson, who is the Democratic lead on the Labor,

## Coming meet

the air despite the fact that she's on the shorter side and was wearing high heels.

MSSM students brought home seven top-medals from the State Math Meet — more than any other school.

Like any successful sports season, winning states means advancing to the next competition. The MSSM team will be attending the New England competition later this month and a

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Commerce, Research and Economic Development Committee told his colleagues, "it's a poke in the eye to watch Canadian trucks drive by my house on their way to Canadian mills with Maine lumber, while my neighbors sit at home unemployed."

The death of LD 314 has also raised a concern among members of the Aroostook County Democratic Committee, as explained by president Troy Haines.

"Our chief concern is that in order for our economy to recover in Aroostook County, we need to address the issues of employment in our industries," Haines said. "Our second concern is that we have a group of people who are marginalizing the hard working people of Aroostook County," he added, addressing dialogue spoken on the House floor of the Statehouse that expressed a stronger work-ethic in Canadian loggers than Maine loggers.

"I can't even fathom — in a state where we're known for our work ethic — we have people standing up in the house defaming our work ethic, let alone the loggers who are out there working chain saws and skidders,"

Haines said. "They picked on the hardest working profession to call lazy, and I find it disgusting."

According to Jackson, for every million "board feet" (a measurement of lumber volume) that is exported to Canada, 13.7 full time, high paying jobs are lost to Maine workers. It is estimated that between 350 and 500 million "board feet," are exported to Canada at the St. Pamphile, Quebec point of entry, yielding a conservative estimate of jobs lost annually is between 4,795 and 6,850 jobs.

"It is our tax money. Why can't we have a say?," Sen. Jackson said. "We are allowing a resource here in Maine to be cut and hauled by people other than Maine workers and then to give landowners a tax break for doing so is mind-boggling."

Haines highlighted that only one house republican broke party lines and voted in favor of the bill, Rep. Bernard Ayotte (R-Caswell).

"Logging is such a significant part of our economy," Haines said. "We've lost much manufacturing and a significant portion of our agricultural as well; if we continue down this path, the outlook for northern Maine is very bleak."

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