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The Honorable Maggie Hassan
United States Senator
324 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Hassan:

Thank you for co-sponsoring the Charitable Conservation Easement Program Integrity Act (S. 2256). Conservation easements are a key tool that both private landowners and land trusts use to protect and conserve the cherished natural areas in New Hampshire. When landowners donate a conservation easement, they give up part of the value of their property. Tax incentives offset some of that loss in property value, making conservation a viable option for more landowners.

We believe the Conservation Easement Tax Incentive has been accomplishing its goal. In fact, the Forest Society holds more than 750 of them on more than 130,000 acres throughout our state. Unfortunately, a few bad actors have been exploiting the incentive to make fast and unreasonably large profits off the donation of an easement. While we in New Hampshire have yet to experience this problem, we are concerned the kinds of abuses seen elsewhere will erode the public's confidence in the importance of conservation easements. Therefore, this is a national problem.

If passed into law, S. 2256 will curb this abuse while still allowing for honest philanthropy in land conservation to continue. We look forward to supporting your efforts to pass the bill. On behalf of the Forest Society, I thank you once again for cosponsoring this legislation.

Sincerely,

Jack Savage, President
Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests

