

**HOUSE . . . . . No.**

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**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

PRESENTED BY:

**Robert L. Rice, Jr.**

*To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in General Court assembled:*

The undersigned legislators and/or citizens respectfully petition for the passage of the accompanying bill:

An Act regulating timber harvesting.

PETITION OF:

NAME:

Robert L. Rice, Jr.

DISTRICT/ADDRESS:

2nd Worcester

# The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year Two Thousand and Nine

## AN ACT REGULATING TIMBER HARVESTING.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:*

1 SECTION 1. Notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, the state forestry  
2 committee (the “committee”) shall adopt regulations to substantially eliminate liquidation  
3 harvesting.  
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5 SECTION 2. No later than December 1, 2009, the Committee shall provisionally adopt rules to  
6 substantially eliminate liquidation harvesting by requiring measures that include, without  
7 limitation, increased professional involvement in planning and implementation of timber  
8 harvesting activities on forestlands. Regulations adopted pursuant to this section must require  
9 that timber harvesting activities be conducted with attention to long-term forest management  
10 principles and include appropriate exemptions, including, but not limited to, exemptions for  
11 landowners and land managers with independent 3rd-party certification, harvests covering small  
12 acreages and permitted land conversions. The regulations must apportion appropriate legal  
13 responsibilities to landowners, foresters and loggers for compliance with the regulations.

14 The Committee shall consult with the commissioner of conservation and recreation, the  
15 commissioner of the department of environmental protection, and the commissioner of fisheries  
16 and wildlife to ensure that regulations regarding forestry practices are consistent with  
17 environmental and wildlife habitat protection.

18 SECTION 3. No later than January 1, 2010, the Committee shall report to the Joint Committee  
19 on Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture with recommendations and an  
20 implementation plan for solutions to the issue of liquidation harvesting. The committee shall  
21 review, at a minimum, the following:

22 1. Improvements to standards and guidelines for timber harvests;

- 23        2. Increased professional involvement in timber harvests;
- 24        3. Improved professional accountability of foresters;
- 25        4. Modifications to land use laws;
- 26        5. Disincentives to liquidation harvesting;
- 27        6. Incentives for landowners who receive independent, 3rd-party certification that their forest  
28 lands are well managed;
- 29        7. Economic policies to expand markets for forest products harvested from well-managed  
30 forests and to promote the Commonwealth as a world leader in green-certified forest lands and  
31 forest products; and
- 32        8. Other relevant approaches.

33        In conducting the review, the committee shall solicit input from representatives of the forestry  
34 industry, including professional loggers, state agencies, and municipalities, industrial and  
35 nonindustrial landowners, environmental groups, financial institutions, Legislators and members  
36 of the public.

37        The final report shall include proposed changes to existing laws, rules and policies necessary  
38 to implement the recommendations.

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