

Dear Honorable Members of the Vermont Senate :

Years ago, when I got discouraged trying to move to the country, only to have the area gentrified, I realized that Vermont had just about everything I was looking for: enough land for horses, beautiful woods and trails, a sparse rural population, and enough culture and the arts to keep a city person satisfied.

What I wanted more than anything was a place that offered safe haven to wildlife and native flora to flourish.

I was surprised to find out the year I moved here that I was required to post my land every year to keep hunters off it. That first year, I did so, using the deed map to find all the corners that constituted my property. I didn't do a very good job and even posted a neighbor's tree and got him riled up.

That initial effort was enough to keep me from posting ever again. It is arduous work, time-consuming, and although the posters were up, I'd have to do them all over again, pay the fee, buy the materials, sign the signs, etc., year in and year out.

And in a short amount of time, wind and bad weather tore them down anyway.

Signs are also shot at and ripped down by people and, when that happens, your land is no longer technically legally posted. Even as a 40-something, posting was just too hard and I hoped that my posted land, although now out of date, would suffice to keep hunters off it with respect for my posted wishes.

Now, 30 years later, I am disabled and absolutely cannot post my land. I am on a lower income, so hiring someone to do it is out of the question.

I am truly appalled that Vermont Fish & Wildlife has this much power over me and my property and the wildlife around me — land that I found, paid for, continue to pay taxes on, and want to keep as a safe place for the wildlife, my pets, and myself.

When I emailed Vermont Fish & Wildlife to ask if someone could help me post my land, I was chastised and told that they don't agree with my request to assist with posting.

Maine and several other states ease landowner burden by allowing them to paint a stripe on a tree every few hundred feet to mark that land as posted against hunting: no more annual posting, only to have a disgruntled passerby tear the sign down.

Additionally, Vermont Fish & Wildlife should assist disabled and elderly landowners who cannot physically post, whether it is with a sign or a purple paint stripe. They should have funding set aside to allow disabled landowners to hire someone to post

land, since Fish & Wildlife are the ones who are responsible for the current onerous posting requirements. The addition of funding will be a huge help to many people like me.

Please vote YES to pass the land posting bill. People like me and many others need your help!

Thank you.

Jane Fitzwilliam