

Statement of Congresswoman Ann McLane Kuster

Before the Federal Lands Subcommittee of

The House Natural Resources Committee

Legislative Hearing on H.R. 930

The Ski Hills Resources for Economic Development (SHRED) Act of 2023

March 28, 2023

Chairman Tiffany, Ranking Member Neguse, and members of the subcommittee thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on H.R. 930, The Ski Hill Resources for Economic Development (SHRED) Act of 2023.

I have the pleasure of representing some of the best skiing in the country. New Hampshire is home to 32 ski areas. These ski areas serve millions of visitors each season and bring in over \$500 million to our local economies. Our ski areas operating on National Forest System lands generate roughly \$40 million in Ski Area Permitting fees annually for the treasury, but these funds never make it back to the agency, forests, and communities where it's needed most.

The SHRED Act will fix this oversight by creating the Ski Area Fee Retention Account. Rather than sending payments back to Washington, D.C., ski areas on National Forest System lands will pay fees into the Ski Area Fee Retention Account. This account will be used to address local Forest Service needs, such as adequate staffing to administer ski area permits and reviews of ski area proposals for future growth. Improving the agency's capacity to administer permits and review proposals is important for providing ski areas with the certainty they need to make business decisions on private investments in public land infrastructure. This bill will also help facilitate the implementation of year-round recreation activities, thereby creating year-round jobs and boosting rural economies. Finally, the bill will help improve avalanche forecasting and education, wildfire preparedness planning and coordination, and support the leasing of USFS Administrative Sites for workforce housing and other community needs.

The SHRED Act is supported by the USDA, the U.S. Forest Service, and the National Ski Areas Association and their 325 ski area members.