

LD 1604 Testimony In Favor

Senator Tepler, Rep. Doudera, and Members of the Environment and Natural Resources Committee,

My name is Ed Spencer and I have lived in West Old Town since 1977. In the early 1990s the local Paper Mill forced a landfill for their waste to be built within two miles of our home. In 2003, the State acquired that landfill and it became the first functioning state owned landfill. At that time there was little awareness of PFAS compounds and the serious threats they pose to all life forms.

Maine has largely lived up to our State Motto in confronting the PFAS crisis head on. Dirigo- I lead! We banned landspreading of sewage sludges containing PFAS and related compounds. The State legislature authorized spending tens of millions of dollars assessing PFAS contamination, installing water treatment systems, and attempting to compensate adversely affected farmers for damaged lands. Maine has spent large amounts of time and money compiling a comprehensive map of PFAS problem areas.

Due to its leadership in confronting the PFAS crisis, Maine's DEP has developed in-house expertise on PFAS compounds and associated issues. One piece of regulation missing to date is to understand and control the effluents of wastewater treatment plants that accept leachate from landfills. LD 1604 would mandate that the DEP set limits on PFAS amounts in effluent from WWTPs.

In addition to filling this gap in regulations that protect Maine's precious waters, LD 1604 requires more testing of landfill leachate so that we can better understand the breadth and changes in concentration of harmful chemicals. Enhanced monitoring of landfill leachate is necessary in light of reports that Casella has been sending leachate from its New Hampshire landfill to the Anson/Madison WWTP.

Since landfills are known to be hotspots of PFAS contamination, abutters and neighbors of landfills need to be able to trust their private water wells. LD 1604 requires that wells will be tested upon request to the DEP and that this information will protect the citizens and hopefully alert others that there is a problem before it grows.

I urge you to vote Ought to Pass after studying LD 1604 and concluding that it is a logical and necessary addition to the work already done by Maine regulators and scientists.

Respectfully submitted,

Ed Spencer