

Date: March 22, 2023

To: Environment & Natural Resources Committee

From: Cole Cochrane, Maine Youth Action

Re: Testimony in support of LD 1009, An Act Regarding the Reduction and Recycling of Food Waste



Senator Brenner, Representative Gramlich, and the distinguished members of the Environment and Natural Resources Committee. My name is Cole Cochrane, I am a senior at Thornton Academy in Saco, and I am here on behalf of Maine Youth Action, a statewide youth advocacy group that represents hundreds of young Mainers from varying backgrounds I have come to testify in support of LD 1009, An Act Regarding the Reduction and Recycling of Food Waste.

My original intention today was only to testify on LD 928, the Pine Tree Amendment, but when Senator Brenner mentioned what else was on the agenda, LD 1009 certainly caught my attention. I took some time to review the bill text and just wrote up this testimony, so my remarks are relatively brief.

As we respond to the climate crisis, it is not simply about how to mitigate its effects and ensure our future existence, though I would say that it is important, it also brings to light fundamental flaws in our communities and gives us an opportunity to correct them in order to promote sustainability. I would say that food consumption directly relates to this sentiment. Therefore, I find Representative Zeigler's bill to be opportune and the appropriate action needed to make our food consumption aligned with what our communities need to see. I see changes in language such as prohibiting the disposal of surplus food; prioritizing the repurpose of food scraps for agricultural use; and directing the use of food scraps towards composting without sludge. All of these changes are exactly what our youth are looking for- changes aiming to address fundamental flaws in our communities and to create a more sustainable system. I think this work ought to be

advanced by the committee and I urge a majority report of “ought to pass” on LD 1009. Thank you.