

To: Joint Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology

From: Marianne Hill, Ph.D., Economist

Date: March 29, 2023

**Re: Testimony in Support of LD 1111**

**“An Act Concerning Contracts and Agreement for Large-Scale Water Extraction”.**

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Greetings Senator Lawrence, Representative Ziegler and EUT Committee Members,

My name is Marianne Hill, I live in South Portland, ME and I am testifying in support of LD 1111 “An Act Concerning Contracts and Agreement for Large-Scale Water Extraction”.

This is an extremely important piece of legislation, marking a critical step towards protecting a natural resource in Maine that is more valuable than oil - water. Water, a shared resource, is under threat from contamination, global warming and excessive extraction. Only the thoughtful stewardship of this resource by the state and by municipalities can ensure its adequate conservation for the future.

Large-scale extraction of water can pose a significant threat to water aquifers. Contracts for the large-scale extraction of water, then, should be periodically re-examined in light of scientific findings. A contract that lasts 45 years would be (and is) irresponsible. A reassessment of contracts every three years as called for by LD 1111, in light of the state of local water tables and of the underlying aquifers, is more than reasonable.

All localities whose future is affected by the large scale extraction of water in their region should have a say about such extraction. LD 1111 calls for public hearings, which would give concerned residents the knowledge they need to be able to act in protection of their water futures.

In this era of global warming and climate change, the idea of 'absolute sovereignty' is obsolete. Consider water in light of global warming. Water vapor is the largest single greenhouse gas in the atmosphere, and has been increasing by about 1 to 2% per decade due to rising global temperatures, according to the UN report on climate change. This added water vapor traps more heat, which "further warms the atmosphere, resulting in even more water vapor in the atmosphere. Scientists estimate this effect ***more than doubles the warming that would happen due to increasing carbon dioxide alone.***" Increasing desertification of agricultural land has been one result. The demand for water, then, will continue to rise, driving up its price. There will be more profit-seekers in the future wanting to capitalize on such rising demand - even at the expense of the long-term health of the economy affected.

I strongly support LD 1111 and urge that you vote "ought to pass" in your report.

Yours sincerely,

Marianne Hill, Ph.D., Economist  
South Portland