



TESTIMONY OF THE MAINE HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION

In Support Of

LD 1214 - *An Act to Clarify the Laws to Combat Perfluoroalkyl and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances Contamination*

April 25, 2023

Senator Brenner, Representative Gramlich and members of the Environment and Natural Resources Committee, my name is Jeff Austin and I am presenting testimony in support of LD 1214 on behalf of the Maine Hospital Association. The Maine Hospital Association (MHA) represents all 36 community-governed hospitals including 33 non-profit general acute care hospitals, 2 private psychiatric hospitals, and 1 acute rehabilitation hospital.

We have three issues we would like to bring to your attention on the issue of PFAS.

First, hospitals are covered by the reporting requirement. Hospitals' internal pharmacies both distribute and sometimes even compound their own drugs. The PFAS chemicals covered by the law are in some of these drugs. Please see Mr. Marston's testimony. As you know, pharmaceuticals must undergo significant safety testing by the FDA. Other states have attempted to put limits on FDA-approved drugs for perceived "safety" reasons. There has been considerable backlash to those initiatives and the public believes the FDA should be the sole regulator of drug safety. Please exempt FDA-approved pharmaceuticals and compound drugs from the PFAS law.

Second, many products we use contain PFAS and our access to those products is jeopardized by the current law. While we support efforts to encourage industries to consider alternatives where viable, until those products are developed, we are reliant on what is available. Please take steps to protect our access to the products we need to protect the health of the public.

Third, to the extent we are users of PFAS, it feels like we are in the dark about whether DEP is going to remove our access to a PFAS product and that concerns us. Our understanding is that if a covered entity who is supposed to report their PFAS-containing products to DEP does not do so, DEP could ban the use of their product in Maine at any time. This concerns us as we believe there is no notice provision to protect users of those products, such as hospitals.

We want to thank Senator Baldacci and thank you for considering our comments.