

Committee on Health and Human Services

LD 1006

April 28, 2023

10 am Cross Building

In support of ensuring access to safe drinking water from household wells in rural areas by expanding testing

Dear Representative Meyer and Senator Baldacci,

My name is Maddy and I am a current junior at Colby College majoring in Biology and Environmental Science with a concentration in public health. I am writing in support of LD1006 to ensure safe drinking water in wells in rural areas of Maine. For many communities in Maine, their only water supply is a local well. Without adequate regulation of these wells, it is possible that many people can be inadvertently harmed by a single contaminated well because many people may rely on it. Specifically, it has become clear that testing for perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl is an important indicator of community health in Maine. After a history of using contaminated sludge as fertilizer across Maine, the responsibility to monitor communities falls on the government. Having data that shows the levels of these contaminants in the water will help inform healthcare decisions and future water regulations.

Rural areas are particularly vulnerable to harm from contamination in their water supply. Their dependence on private wells creates an added importance for a reliable and safe water supply. Given the countless daily necessities of water, there are significant human health implications to drinking contaminated water for extended periods of time. PFAS chemicals have been shown to affect the endocrine system when present in small amounts in the human body. The EPA has proposed to set the maximum contamination level for PFOA and PFOS to 4 ppt for public water supplies. However, without monitoring private wells, this leaves a significant population out of this regulation and at an increased risk. Since rural wells are private and may not be regularly monitored, it is crucial to expand funding to monitor PFAS in rural wells. Everyone deserves to have access to safe drinking water without having to worry about exposure to excessive amounts of harmful chemicals.

Thank you for your consideration.

Maddy Eippert  
Waterville, Maine