

Nancy Olmstead  
Portland  
LD 2091

Dear Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry:

My name is Nancy Olmstead and I am a resident of Portland. I am writing today in support of LD 2091. LD 2091 would amend an existing statute that informs the State guidance on reusable, refillable containers. Right now, the State is actively stopping businesses from providing reusable containers filled with food to customers, and then receiving them back for sanitation and reuse. I am increasingly worried about plastic pollution and waste, and when I go out to eat, I bring my own containers to take home leftovers. I hardly ever get take-out because I can't stand the amount of wasteful, single-use packaging that it comes in. Same with prepared meal kits - currently I don't buy these because of the tremendous amount of waste. I would like to support my local restaurants more and would do so if they could offer returnable, re-fillable, reusable take-away containers. This bill would allow business owners who want to use reusable containers to do so. It does not compel any business to do this, it would be optional and subject to regulations. But it is a common sense measure given that reusable food packaging is already being used throughout the US and the world and is totally safe with proper sanitation. I know many businesses in Maine would like to contribute to the circular economy, reduce waste, and create jobs, but current policy would prohibit growth in this sector. If LD 2091 fails to pass, then businesses in our State will be unable to provide food in reusable containers to consumers and then receive them back for sanitizing and reuse.

In addition, current reuse policy is in opposition to Maine's waste reduction policies. Maine has just passed an EPR for Packaging law, and modernized Bottle Bill law that have provisions and incentives that encourage businesses to embrace reuse, but the current law and guidance will prohibit Maine from using these laws to facilitate more reuse for food packaging in the State.

I urge you to support LD 2091. Thank you for the chance to voice my support for this bill.

Best regards,  
Nancy Olmstead  
Portland, ME