

**Testimony of Behalf of the University of Maine System Presented by Dr. Jason Bolton,
Associate Dean of the University of Maine Cooperative Extension
In Support of LD130 – Formalizing the PFAS Response Program – February 6, 2025**

Senator Talbot Ross, Representative Pluecker, and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture, Conservation & Forestry: My name is Dr. Jason Bolton and I am the Associate Dean of the University of Maine Cooperative Extension and the PI of several congressional discretionary spending projects including the UMaine PFAS Analytical Detection Laboratory and UMaine PFAS Research for Informing Farm Management Decisions. On behalf of the University of Maine System (UMS) and UMaine Extension, I am testifying in support of LD 130. This legislation will formalize the PFAS Response Program, which has resulted in collaborations between the University of Maine and the Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry (DACF) to support PFAS understanding, mitigation, and practices.

Since its inception, the PFAS Response Program has been crucial in addressing the challenges posed by per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) contamination. The collaboration between the DACF and the University of Maine has been instrumental in delivering scientific research, technical assistance, and direct farmer support. Through ongoing partnerships, the PFAS Response Program has contributed to:

- Conducting academic research on PFAS impacts, mitigation strategies, and long-term agricultural implications.
- Collaborating closely with DACF staff and affected farmers to implement best practices for monitoring and remediation.
- Establishing the UMaine [PFAS Navigators program](#) to guide farmers through complex regulatory, financial, and remediation challenges.
- Expanding PFAS laboratory capabilities to enhance testing, analysis, and data-driven policy recommendation

As Maine continues to address the challenges posed by PFAS contamination, we must maintain and strengthen the support structures available to our agricultural community. The passage of LD 130 will provide long-term stability for affected farmers and enable continued research and response efforts. We urge the committee to support this bill as written to preserve these vital resources.

Thank you for your time and consideration. We appreciate your commitment to Maine's agricultural future and look forward to continued collaboration on this critical issue.

Sincerely,

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