

Karen Prieto  
Brunswick  
LD 400

Dear Chairperson Doudera and Members of the Committee,  
Greetings and thank you for your continued efforts to protect Maine's beautiful natural environment, stand off climate change, and uphold environmental justice.

My name is Karen Staples Prieto. I spent my childhood roaming undeveloped woodlands and frog bogs around the River Road in Topsham. After many years out of state, I now live in Brunswick where I enjoy BTLT trails, steward a pollinator garden, manage a community compost pile, and buy the majority of my food direct from local farmers.

I am writing to urgently ask you to vote "ought to pass" for:

- \* LD 400, which seeks to establish a critical reporting system for locations storing Aqueous Film Forming Foam (AFFF), empowering the Maine DEP to monitor and address potential risks.

- \* LD 222, which takes this one step further by creating a take-back program to safely collect and store AFFF until a safe disposal method is available.

- \* LD 407, which ensures the removal of all remaining AFFF from Brunswick Landing by 2026, eliminating the risk of another major spill at this site.

Together, these bills take a proactive approach to preventing future contamination and protecting Maine's waterways.

Back in 2022 when I learned of the devastating impacts of PFAS sludge on Maine farmers, I asked myself, "how could the state have let this happen to people who provide nourishment for our families?" My conclusion at the time was, "we just didn't know."

Today we DO know. We know clearly how PFAS chemicals persist in the environment indefinitely, posing significant risks to human health, wildlife, and water quality. We know why it is critical to eliminate use of these substances and dispose of them with rigorous caution. We know that AFFF contains high concentrations of some of the most hazardous PFAS chemicals.

And yet, last August, 1,450 gallons of AFFF concentrate leaked into the environment, contaminating Mere Brook, Harpswell Cove, and the Androscoggin River. This was not just the largest AFFF spill in Maine history—it was the sixth-largest in the nation.

LD 400, LD 222, and LD 407 are essential steps to safeguarding Maine's environment, protecting public health, and ensuring responsible management of AFFF. Mainers deserve to live without fear of toxic chemicals in their drinking water and communities. Maine can and should follow the lead of other states, such as New Hampshire and Colorado, which have adopted safer alternatives and established collection programs. Please vote in favor of these bills and take action to prevent further harm from PFAS chemicals.

Thank you and best wishes.

Sincerely,

Karen M Staples Prieto

A midcoast resident concerned for the well-being of my neighbors and local environment.