

Christine Foster
Brunswick
LD 400

Committee on Environment and Natural Resources

Re: Support for LD 400 (AFFF Reporting Requirement), LD 222 (AFFF Take-Back Program), and LD 407 (Brunswick Landing Cleanup by 2026).

Dear Chairperson Doudera and Members of the Committee,

I am writing in support of LD 400, to establish reporting requirements for AFFF storage, LD 222, to create a take-back program for AFFF to ensure safe collection, storage, and disposal, and LD 407, which ensures removal of all remaining AFFF from Brunswick Landing by 2026.

I live on Brunswick where, as you know, the largest spill of AFFF in Maine took place in August 2024 at the Brunswick Executive Airport operated by the Midcoast Regional Redevelopment Authority (MRRA).

This was not the first spill of AFFF at the airport. To make sure it is the last, MRRA must safely dispose of its remaining AFFF. But despite community outcry, they have so far failed to do so voluntarily.

Six months later, MRRA continues to hold large amounts of highly toxic, PFAS-containing AFFF, defying the Town of Brunswick's resolutions that the AFFF systems be immediately shut off. (As bad as the August spill from Hangar 4 was, a spill from Hangar 6 could be even worse for our community since it is located close to a wellfield for our public drinking water system; this wellfield was previously contaminated by PFAS, requiring installation of an expensive water treatment system, and is at risk of further contamination).

MRRA's AFFF stocks, inherited from the Navy, are very old and include AFFF containing PFOS (a CERCLA-listed chemical), which 3M phased out in 2002 when its health dangers became clear.

It is alarming that over 20 years after being discontinued, this highly toxic material is still in the hands of MRRA, a small quasi-state municipal corporation with little oversight that has repeatedly failed to safeguard it.

MRRA has a troubling history with AFFF management, including another large spill in 2012, combining different types of AFFF without recording this on the container label or in their inventory, failing to fix known deficiencies in their foam equipment for over a year before the 2024 spill, and currently storing AFFF in Hangar 6 with "no secondary containment" (apparently in decades-old plastic tanks). These actions demonstrate a lack of attentiveness to basic chemical safety.

I have become convinced of the critical need for this legislation, despite its cost. There are costs of inaction, as well: the Maine Bureau of Risk Management paid a \$250,000 insurance payout to MRRA, and Maine DEP continues to devote extensive resources to environmental testing in the Brunswick area. Meanwhile, MRRA continues to delay AFFF removal despite the clear risk to the public.

I urge you to pass LD 400, LD 222, and LD 407 to mitigate the health, environmental, and economic risks of this toxic AFFF in Maine.

Christine Foster, Brunswick