

Testimony in Support of:

LD 222: An Act to Establish a Take-back and Disposal Program for Firefighting and Fire-suppressing Foam to Which Perfluoroalkyl and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances Have Been Added

LD 400: Resolve, Directing the Department of Public Safety, Office of the State Fire Marshal to Compile a Statewide Inventory of Aqueous Film-forming Foam Concentrate

LD 407: An Act to Prohibit the Use of Aqueous Film-forming Foam at the Former Brunswick Naval Air Station

Joint Standing Committee on Environment and Natural Resources
Room 216, Cross State Office Building
Wednesday, February 26, 2025

Senator Tepler, Representative Doudera, and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Environment and Natural Resources. My name is Matthew Wellington, and I'm a Brunswick resident. I'm testifying in support of LD 222, LD 400, and LD 407 to address the widespread, toxic threat of PFAS contamination in my community and others across Maine.

In 2021 my wife and I spent every penny we had to buy our first home, a small house in Brunswick not far from the former naval air base. We were ecstatic to have found something in such a tough housing market and in a town as vibrant and welcoming as Brunswick.

Like most folks in the area, we see the former base as a great example of redevelopment, with more and more residential housing going up alongside some of our favorite local businesses. That's why it was such a shock last August when 1,450 gallons of AFFF fire fighting foam, mixed with 50,000 gallons of water, spilled out of Hangar 4, into the environment. Exposure to PFAS chemicals has been linked to a host of health issues, including increased risk for certain cancers, early puberty onset and neurodevelopmental issues in children.

Luckily, the spill happened in a hangar outside of the public water supply zone, and the PFAS contamination didn't make it into the town's drinking water. But people with private wells in the area may not have been so lucky, and if another spill happens in a hangar closer to the public water, things could be far worse.

I still love living in Brunswick. We'll raise our daughter here and build a community. But I also feel like we're living next to a ticking time bomb, and many other towns in Maine may be in a similar boat.

I urge you to please vote "ought to pass" on ***LD 222, LD 400, LD 407*** so that we can track, inventory, and properly dispose of PFAS laden AFFF in Maine.

Matthew Wellington
Brunswick, ME