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President of the Senate

THE MAINE SENATE
132nd Legislature

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Augusta, Maine 04333

Testimony in Support of LD 400, 222, 407
Letter to the Joint Standing Committee on Environment and Natural Resources
February 26, 2025

Senator Tepler, Representative Doudera and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Environment and Natural Resources, my name is Mattie Daughtry. I serve as President of the Maine Senate and proudly represent Senate District 23, which includes Brunswick, Freeport, Harpswell, Pownal, Chebeague Island, and part of Yarmouth. I am writing in support of all three bills, LD 400, LD 222, and LD 407. After all that Brunswick went through during the August 2024 environmental disaster, it is my hope that we can prevent similar tragedies from rocking any other Maine community.

This disaster in my hometown, the sixth worst PFAs spill in the country, could easily happen again, if actions aren't taken to inventory and dispose of the toxic foam. In my community, toxic foam spilled into our groundwater, the stormwater system, the sewer system and the watershed. We can prevent this from happening elsewhere. Representative Ankeles' bills call for a statewide AFFF foam inventory (LD 400); a state-run voluntary foam collection, storage and disposal program (LD 222); and removal of the 5,700 gallons of foam concentrate that remains at the former Brunswick Naval Air Station (LD 407). All of these initiatives are critical for preventing future disasters in our state.

My constituents have had great concerns about well water, town water, air quality, shellfish and our aquaculture industry, human and animal health, not to mention property values. My constituents worried about the cost of cleanup and who would take those costs on. These are the kind of environmental, economic, and fiscal concerns that would impact another region if we do not deploy the preventative measures outlined in this suite of bills.

The Maine Department of Environmental Protection was an important partner in the remediation and data-collection efforts that our community has been going through since August. Cleanup efforts lasted months. I was heartened to hear Commissioner Loyzim testify that these bills are important, saying, "although passage of these three bills will have a definite price tag, the monetary cost of not doing what they require may be much, much greater."

As our state grapples with how we help our fire departments and prevent harm, I implore the committee to take these measures under serious consideration. Thank you for your attention to these critical environmental and economic solutions. I urge you to pass LD 400, LD 222 and LD 407 to provide more security to any community that stores firefighting foam.

President of the Senate, Senate District 23
Brunswick, Freeport, Harpswell, Pownal, Chebeague Island, and part of Yarmouth