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Testimony of Kevin Roche, CEO/General Manager of **ecomaine**

Environment & Natural Resources Committee in Opposition of

**LD 479 An Act to Facilitate Expansion of the State's Recycling Efforts
Under the Beverage Container Redemption Program**

March 17, 2025

ecomaine is a non-profit publicly owned and publicly operated solid waste organization serving 74 municipalities - 20 owner communities and 54 associate and contract member communities – accommodating the waste management needs for a population of nearly 500,000 people.

ecomaine's operations and programs include: Waste-to-Energy (WTE) renewable power plant, single-sort Recycling Center, a food waste recovery program, and a 289-acre ashfill/landfill. Perhaps the most unique and notable aspect of **ecomaine** is the commitment as a leader in raising public awareness of sustainable waste management strategies. This very commitment is included in **ecomaine**'s Mission Statement established by **ecomaine**'s Board of Directors:

“ecomaine provides comprehensive long-term solid waste solutions in a safe, environmentally responsible, economically sound manner, and is a leader in raising public awareness of sustainable waste management strategies”

The State of Maine's recycling goals have consistently sought to increase the residential recycling rate. **ecomaine**'s commitment to increasing Recycling rates extends beyond its first-in-the-State single-sort recycling center to a new proposed State-of-the-art recycling facility to meet the growing needs of **ecomaine**'s communities. This new facility will enhance **ecomaine**'s on-going commitment to a 50% recycling rate and is scheduled to be open in the Autumn of 2026. **ecomaine**'s communities are strongly committed to investing in this pioneering recycling technology to recover more recyclables from the waste stream and we are concerned that LD 479 will diminish the efficacy of the new Recycling system by reducing the universe of recoverable material reaching this facility. A reduction in quantity of recycled material will negatively impact the return on this investment for **ecomaine** and its partner communities. Furthermore, it will duplicate the recycling collection infrastructure that is already in place that most residents rely upon and currently participate in as part of their daily recycling practice.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide these comments.