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Representative Doudera, Senator Tepler, and the entire Committee on Environment and Natural Resources, thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today in opposition to LD 987. My name is Bill Pluecker, and I represent House District 44, which includes Warren, Hope, and Union.

The legislature worked for two years to amend the law established by LD 1537 last year. These amendments were made to help industry comply with PFAS regulations while also providing exemptions for products where substituting PFAS would be difficult. The goal was to strike a balance between the needs of the industry and the public's health concerns over PFAS exposure. Furthermore, the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) is currently in the process of rulemaking for the PFAS products law, and any amendments at this stage could delay the process and complicate its implementation.

Maine is not alone in its efforts to combat PFAS contamination. Minnesota has already implemented a ban on PFAS in the same products covered by LD 987, showing that other states are taking proactive steps to reduce PFAS exposure. This serves as a reminder of the importance of Maine continuing to pursue its efforts to protect public health, without rolling back the progress that other states have made.

LD 987 goes beyond farm equipment and removes the ban on PFAS in textiles and refrigerants used in motorized vehicles, such as cars and trucks. Consumers are directly exposed to PFAS through these materials, and allowing such exemptions would only increase the risk of exposure to these harmful chemicals. Rather than expanding sources of exposure, we should be focused on reducing them in order to protect public health.

Finally, LD 987 appears unnecessary. Farm equipment is already covered by existing exemptions in the PFAS products law, making this bill redundant. Additionally, the bill's provisions would permit PFAS in textiles and refrigerants in vehicles, creating new exposure pathways that are not currently exempt. Since semiconductors are already exempt, there is no need for further exemptions for other internal components, which would only complicate efforts to reduce PFAS exposure and protect public health.

Thank you. I urge you to reject LD 987 and continue working toward a safer, PFAS-free future for Maine.