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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 827. My name is Bill Pluecker, and I represent House District 44, which includes Warren, Hope, and Union.

According to the National Poison Control Center, when nonstick cookware is heated to high temperatures, it can release fumes that may be harmful if inhaled. Teflon coatings on cookware begin to break down at temperatures above 500°F, and when the surface of nonstick cookware gets scratched, it can also cause these fumes to be released.

How we cook is just as important. For example, preheating an empty pan can cause it to reach dangerously high temperatures, while cooking on high heat or using the broiler with nonstick cookware is also not recommended. Additionally, old pans with scratches or chips in the coating can pose a serious risk to health.

While manufacturers who profit from the sale of PFAS-coated pans may argue their products are safe, we must ask whether their testing has been done in real-world conditions—where products age, are repeatedly heated to very high temperatures, and suffer from scratches and wear.

Here in Maine, we know that our people face disproportionately high exposure to PFAS, whether through drinking water, wild game, fish consumption, or other consumer products. We've already passed laws to begin reducing this burden. To take steps backward when the dangers of PFAS in our food system are widely recognized just doesn't make sense. After a farmer works so hard to ensure that the food they deliver is safe and free from PFAS exposure, why would we then encourage consumers to cook it in a pan coated with PFAS?

I urge you to consider the long-term health of our communities and reject LD 827.  
Thank you.