

Testimony IN SUPPORT
LD 1073 An Act to Amend Provisions of the Maine Metallic Mineral Mining
Act to Advance Health Equity and Improve the Well-being of
Vulnerable Populations
Joint Committee on Environment and Natural Resources
Public Hearing
March 24, 2025 | Submitted by Jacquelyn Elliott

Chair Senator Tepler, Chair Representative Doudera and Honorable Committee Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony **IN SUPPORT of LD 1703**. For decades I have advocated for policy that protects public health and the environment and upholds the rights of citizens most impacted by policy decisions. Metallic mining is viewed as the most destructive and polluting activity engaged by mankind. The rights of Indigenous Peoples and other vulnerable populations are historically among the most abused by mining operations. Wabanaki Tribes and other Maine citizens have come together over the years and successfully held off predatory mining operation proposals and protected the places they call home from threats to their water, sustenance fishing, and other harmful cultural impacts. **LD 1703 would advance protections for human health.**

Guidance and protection are increasingly coming under the stewardship of State regulators. LD 1703 would provide a mechanism for evaluating and protecting for human health not currently covered in our Metallic Mining law. LD 1703 appropriately centers the rights of those who would bear the most direct impacts of mining decisions. The safeguards that would be put in place are common sense, improve how mining decisions are made, and promote outcomes that reflect values held by Maine citizens. Before any mining operation could begin there would need to be a **comprehensive baseline health assessment for communities impacted by those operations that includes periodic reevaluation.**

LD 1073 would protect communities facing the threats from mining operations and provide a transparent process in decision making that affords citizens a ‘Right to Know’ to understand the potential risks of toxic exposures and contamination from proposed mining operations. Protections would be sufficiently monitored post-closure for mining wastes for as long as threats remain with financial assurance to cover

monitoring and any required remediation. Financial provision would **assure associated economic and health burdens are not borne by the impacted communities. Polluters must pay their own costs.**

Thank you for considering my comments. I ask the Committee to unanimously vote **OUGHT TO PASS.**

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