

Heather Omand
Freedom
LD 1073

Greetings Senator Tepler, Representative Doudera, and ENR Committee Members,

My name is Heather Omand, I live in Freedom, ME and I am testifying in support of LD 1073 "An Act to Amend Provisions of the Maine Metallic Mining Mineral Act to Advance Health Equity and Improve the Well Being of Vulnerable Populations".

Metallic mining is known as the most destructive and polluting human activity on the planet. We must advance metallic mining protections here in Maine to protect human health.

A few of the essential solutions that LD 1073 provides:

1. A comprehensive baseline health assessment for mining communities prior to initiation of mining operations. It also requires periodic reevaluation. There are no specific human health protections or evaluations in the current Metallic Mineral Mining law.
2. Communities affected by mining should be granted a 'Right to Know' status in a transparent, contemporaneous and public manner. This will allow communities to understand the risks from potential exposure to toxic materials from mining operations.
3. This bill would also require that there is adequate monitoring of toxic waste after closure. The monitoring will occur for as long as the danger of contamination persists and not terminate at an arbitrary date while the toxic waste may still be harmful. The monitoring must be active, and there must be financial assurance to cover the monitoring and any remediation.

The health and economic burden should not be placed on communities long after the mining operations have been terminated. In the current mining laws you have to have a violation in order to have protection of human health. This bill provides an intervention step to help prevent mining violations.

I think this bill is essential and important to the health of Maine communities. Please support this bill!

Sincerely,
Heather