Elizabeth Sekera
Bangor
LD 1073

Testimony 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
To the Members of the Committee on Environment and Natural Resources,
My name is Elizabeth Sekera and I am writing in strong support of LD 1073. As a Registered Nurse and Population Health Manager with 20 years of experience working with Medicaid and the populations it serves, I have seen firsthand the health disparities that environmental hazards create—particularly for vulnerable communities.

Mining operations have well-documented health risks, including exposure to heavy metals and other pollutants that contribute to chronic disease, developmental disorders, and respiratory conditions. These health burdens disproportionately impact low-income and rural populations who may already struggle with limited access to healthcare. Without proper monitoring and accountability, these conditions lead to increased healthcare costs, much of which falls on publicly funded programs such as Medicaid.

LD 1073 is a necessary step in ensuring that we collect comprehensive data on the health impacts of mining. By tracking and analyzing this information, we can proactively identify health concerns, implement prevention strategies, and ultimately reduce the long-term cost burden of unchecked environmental hazards. Prevention is always more cost-effective than treatment, and requiring this level of oversight is a responsible approach to protecting both public health and the financial stability of our healthcare systems.

I urge you to support LD 1073 to safeguard the health and well-being of Maine's residents, particularly those who are most vulnerable to the environmental and economic consequences of mining activities.

Thank you for your time and consideration.
Sincerely,
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