

Dear Mr. Tucker, Senator Brenner, and Committee members,

Thank you for your time and consideration of my testimony. My name is Louis Ricou. I am a student and resident in Bar Harbor, Maine, and I am testifying in opposition to LD 69, an act to repeal the law restricting the use of certain single-use plastic bags in retail establishments.

Moving to Maine from Pennsylvania, one of the most inspiring things I learned about this state is its fierce dedication and intentionality to considering the health of natural areas and ecosystems. The law restricting the use of certain single-use plastic bags was in my view a courageous choice to look directly at the issues created by our practices around plastic usage, and to take action in the moment to address the consequences of excessive usage of plastic in our daily lives. According to the *Natural Resources Council of Maine*, if we continue with our trend of plastic usage, there will be 12 billion metric tons of plastic in our landfills, and in these natural lands and areas in Maine which hold so much value for me and likely many Mainers as well. Additionally, a report from the *Ellen Macarthur Foundation* titled *The New Plastics Economy: Rethinking the future of plastics & catalysing action* states if we do not work to alter our trends with plastic usage, by 2050 there will be, by weight, more plastic in the ocean than fish.

However, it is exactly initiatives and victories like Title 38, §1611, which choose to decrease in any small way our usage of plastic, which are the first forward fires that will light a new possibility for our reality with this Earth. Maine has been at the front of these initiatives, whether they be bans on foam food containers or EPR packaging laws, because we know the invaluable richness of natural lands, and that our job must be to protect them.

Nor is Title 38, §1611 an excessively restrictive law in my understanding. It does allow for exceptions for plastic bags to be sold and used in certain situations, such as at pharmacies or as being bought to be used as trash bags or for other purposes. This law shows us how we can balance moving forward with our relationship to plastic usage while simultaneously remaining grounded in the reality of our contemporary plastic needs. Repealing this law would allow plastics to re-enter our environments through another avenue, and just as tragically could bolster a trend away from protecting our environments from excessive plastic waste.

In closing, I ask you to please vote against LD 69, *An Act to Repeal the Law Restricting the Use of Certain Plastic, Paper and Single-use Bags*, to demonstrate that we understand a future of

excessive plastics is not a future we want to live in, and we are willing to start taking steps towards another reality.

Thank you all very much for your time and consideration.

In gratitude,

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