

Testimony by **Richard Atlee** of Southwest Harbor in response to  
**LD56: An Act to Remove the 5 Cent Fee for Bags in Retail Stores**  
**Summary: Ought not to pass**

Senator Tepler and Representative Doudera and members of the Joint Committee on Environment and Natural Resources:

As someone who was involved in the work leading up to the passage of 38 MRSA §1611, I would like to make the following points supporting a position of "**Ought not to pass**" on LD56:

1. **Whereas**, it has **not** been demonstrated that the 5¢ fee is an economic burden from which Maine residents need protection, and
2. **Whereas**, the same can be said of the non-existence of an emergency in this regard, and
3. **Whereas**, the fee was originally intended to reduce the flow of plastics into the environment by providing an incentive to customers to make use of reusable bags, and
4. **Whereas**, the importance of environmental plastic reduction for the health of Maine residents has not gone away, therefore
5. **Until adequate research indicates that the use pattern of plastic bags by customers has failed to perform this reduction, that incentive should remain in place.**