



Solutions for a
Toxic-Free Tomorrow

Testimony of Sarah Woodbury, Vice President of Policy and Advocacy, Defend Our Health
In Support of LD 1047, "An Act to Impose an Additional Tax on Certain Unearned Income"
Before the Joint Committee on Taxation
March 26, 2025

Senator Grohoski, Representative Cloutier, and members of the Joint Committee on Taxation. My name is Sarah Woodbury. I am the Vice President of Policy and Advocacy for Defend Our Health. Defend Our Health's mission is to make sure that everyone has equal access to safe food and drinking water, healthy homes, and products that are toxic-free and climate friendly. I am here to testify in support of LD 1047, "An Act to Impose an Additional Tax on Certain Unearned Income".

There are many programs and services that could do much to benefit the people of Maine but, because of lack of funding, they are unable to be implemented or fully staffed. We care deeply about making sure that Mainers have access to clean drinking water. Over 50% of Maine people get their drinking water from residential wells, the largest percentage in the nation. Yet, many of those people cannot afford to test those wells for things like lead, arsenic, and PFAS. Toxics in drinking water that can impact their health and the health of their families. Additionally, treatment systems for contaminated water are expensive and many cannot afford the costs of remediation. All Mainers deserve safe drinking water but there isn't funding to provide resources to those who need it. If we passed LD 1047 and made the wealthy pay their fare share, we could provide much-needed resources and staffing for the program to make sure that everyone has clean drinking water. We could also look at increasing funding for things like remediation and cleanup for those impacted by PFAS contamination across the state, protecting our firefighters by disposing of PFAS-containing firefighting foam safely, and providing resources for tenants and homeowners to make sure that their houses are safe and free from toxics like lead and radon. There are so many people we could help with additional funding. That is why we feel it's important to support legislation like LD 1047 that will add a 4% surcharge on annual capital gains for people making over 250,000 or 500,000 for couples. This is not an unreasonable amount. This is only a tax on unearned income for the sales of assets that have increased in value like art, second homes, or stocks. This does not impact homeowners selling their primary residences. This will only impact the wealthiest Mainers.

The wealthy should be required, just like the rest of the taxpayers, to pay taxes to help fund important services and programs that we all depend upon. The tax burden of the state should not land on solely on low and middle-income Mainers. LD 1047 is a commonsense piece of legislation to make sure the wealthy pay their fare share. Therefore we urge you to vote "ought to pass" on LD 1047.