



# Maine Community College System

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**TO: Senator Tepler, Representative Doudera**  
**Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Environment and Natural Resources**

**FROM: Becky Smith, Director of Government and Community Relations**

**RE: Testimony in Opposition to LD 1177, *Resolve, Establishing a 3-year Moratorium on the Installation or Reinstallation of Synthetic Turf and Requiring a Study of the Public Health and Environmental Risks of Synthetic Turf***

DATE: April 9, 2025

Senator Tepler, Representative Doudera and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Environment and Natural Resources, my name is Becky Smith, and I am testifying today in opposition to section two of LD 1177, on behalf of the Maine Community College System.

Currently, only one of our seven colleges has synthetic turf, Central Maine Community College (CMCC). However, that athletic complex is an integral part of the campus and serves the broader community. The decision to install turf was not taken lightly and environmental, labor and community impact were taken into consideration when it was built. Synthetic turf requires no irrigation system, saving water and infrastructure costs. Synthetic turf eliminates any need to mow which reduces fuel use and labor costs. Synthetic turf can be used year-round.

Many local high schools and youth teams rely on CMCC's field. CMCC serves as a community partner and supports school and recreational programming that otherwise would have limited access during Maine's frequent adverse weather conditions. Predicting the high usage due to flexibility of the synthetic fields from the beginning, CMCC invested in lighting allowing the college and community to utilize the field despite Maine's short hours of daylight during most of the academic year. This lighting came at a significant expense. Had they been required to install natural grass instead of synthetic turf, they would not have installed field lighting due to the decreased usage during most of the year.

Synthetic turf has a 10–15-year life span before it needs to be replaced (CMCC's is already five years old). If replacements are blocked in the future, CMCC will need downgrade to natural grass, limiting access, increasing costs, and significantly reducing their return on investment.

If this bill were to move forward, we respectfully ask that Sec. 2 be removed from the Resolve.

Having said that, we are also more than happy to participate in any study that the bill may create.