



April 9, 2025

Honorable Senator Margaret Rotundo, Chair
Honorable Drew Gattine, Chair
Appropriations and Financial Affairs Committee
100 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333

Re: Testimony In Support of LD 25 An Act to Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue to Fund Wastewater Treatment Facility Planning and Construction of Infrastructure Projects

Dear Senator Rotundo, Representative Gattine, and Members of the Appropriations and Financial Affairs Committee:

I am writing in support of LD 25 and to urge the Committee to vote in favor of the bill.

The Portland Water District (PWD or the "District") is a quasi-municipal utility created by private and special law of the State Legislature in 1908 to provide water to the people of greater Portland. Today, PWD provides drinking water to over 200,000 people in 11 Cumberland County member communities and wastewater treatment services to six of those communities. The affairs of PWD are managed by a Board of Trustees composed of 11 members, all popularly elected by a plurality of the voters from the communities they represent. We do not have shareholders that profit from our activities, and therefore, our sole interest is meeting the needs of our customers.

Wastewater treatment facilities, including the four operated by PWD, treat waste generated by Maine communities and protect the environment. Wastewater treatment preserves the environment that Maine's residents and visitors appreciate and value. The wastewater treatment process generates residuals or biosolids that must be managed on a regular, often daily, basis.

Maine's response to PFAS concerns and biosolids has increased the cost and nearly entirely restricted biosolids management options. While there are some developing alternatives, the primary landfill outlets are facing challenging expansions in the face of dwindling capacity that is expected to be exceeded in the next five years or less.

LD 25 will provide much needed assistance and encourage municipal treatment plants to implement facilities to reduce the volume and characteristics of biosolids to be managed. It will lessen the burden on existing outlets, primarily landfills.

The Portland Water District is actively engaged in seeking a sludge drying facility that could provide beneficial services to other smaller systems as well as serving our needs. This funding would help support such a project.

Yours Truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Scott Firmin', is written over a blue wavy line that extends across the width of the page.

Scott Firmin, P.E.

Director of Wastewater Operations, Portland Water District