



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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**Testimony of Rep. Dan Ankeles regarding
LD 25, An Act to Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue to Fund Wastewater Treatment
Facility Planning and Construction of Infrastructure Projects
Before the Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs**

Senator Rotundo, Representative Gattine and honorable members of the Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs, thank you for the opportunity to write you. I am Representative Dan Ankeles, and I serve House District 100, which is a central portion of Brunswick that includes the site of Maine's worst ever toxic firefighting foam spill on August 19 of 2024. I want to make a request to this committee regarding **LD 25, An Act to Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue to Fund Wastewater Treatment Facility Planning and Construction of Infrastructure Projects, An Act to Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue to Fund Wastewater Treatment Facility Planning and Construction of Infrastructure Projects** or any bond package this committee passes that includes environmental spending of any kind.

As you might imagine, since the spill, Brunswick has had its struggles with the Midcoast Regional Redevelopment Authority (MRRA), which is the quasi-governmental entity that was managing the hanger at the time of the spill. I won't go into that here, but what you need to know is that, beyond those struggles, the new MRRA executive director and I understand that our post-spill recovery depends on our cooperation and our willingness to turn over every last stone to ensure we get rid of harmful poisons and prevent any further damage to public health, regional watersheds and working waterfront businesses.

Among the most important actions we need to take on the former Naval airbase is the flushing out of the soon-to-closed fire suppression systems that deploy the toxic PFAS-containing aqueous film-forming foam, or AFFF. This is a difficult, labor intensive and expensive process. Neither MRRA nor the Brunswick municipal government have the kind of large coffers to easily cover this operation without some kind of help.

If we are going to talk about bonding to manage environmental crises in our state, I am asking this committee to include language guaranteeing the ability of MRRA just to be able to apply — to compete with other applicants — to address the worst spill of this kind in the entire history of our state.

Maybe some would think it's not appropriate to single out my own community for something like this, but please tell that to my constituents who have to live with forever chemicals that are poisoning them in their own yards.

Again, a simple amendment will just allow MRRA — with the support of the Brunswick community — to make its case to the state.

Thank you for your understanding with respect to such an awkward situation.