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Orono
LD 1420

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Orono, ME

Monday, April 14th, 2025

To the Board of Trustees, Office of the President, and UMaine Campus Community,

From: Edgelynn Venuti

Re: UMaine Orono Waste & Recycling Practices

I am a second year student here at UMaine studying Ecology and Environmental Sciences. I was disheartened to hear about the proposed transition to a single-stream recycling system. I have been under the impression that UMaine no longer had a recycling system in place and that any attempts to sort on campus were wasted as it was combined with trash later in the process. I know I am not the only student who believes this, indicating a strong need for enhanced education around recycling initiatives on campus.

However, increased education is not all that is needed. UMaine also needs to continue its commitment to having a recycling program in place that actually recycles. Switching to the proposed single-stream recycling system would not fulfill this need. The board should consider the long-term impacts of this decision. The climate crisis is already a pressing issue and we need to focus on reducing greenhouse gas emissions, not creating more. With UMaine choosing to divest from fossil fuels only a few years ago now, this choice backtracks on those moral efforts. Consider the longevity of the natural health and well-being of this beautiful state we call home.

Please at the very least consider utilizing current recycling efforts and make an effort to expand on-campus education about recycling efforts. If capacity is an issue, connect with student organizations such as Waste Minimizers. There are so many passionate people here willing to step up to ensure that UMaine is a clean, sustainable campus. Another consideration is for UMaine to transition to the Hampden separate trash and recycling stream which is more cost-effective than the existing program and only 4,000 dollars more than the single-stream program under consideration.

I urge you to continue and make efforts to expand upon UMaine's recycling program and education and reject the proposal to switch to a single-stream recycling system.

Respectfully submitted,
Edgelynn Venuti