

Testimony of Sarah Woodbury, Vice President of Policy and Advocacy, Defend Our Health
In Support of LD 1065 “An Act Regarding the Reduction and Recycling of Food Waste”
Before the Environment and Natural Resources Committee
April 16, 2025

Senator Tepler, Representative Doudera and members of the Environment and Natural Resources Committee, 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 1065 “An Act Regarding the Reduction and Recycling of Food Waste”.

Maine is dealing with a real waste crisis. Because of the necessary ban on the land application of sludge, Maine’s state-owned landfill, Juniper Ridge Landfill (JRL), has limited space. While there are plans in place to help deal with the amount of sludge going into landfills, we do need to do everything we can to limit what ends up in our landfills.

Food waste is the most common material landfilled, making up about 24% of municipal solid waste. Maine is the only New England state with no food waste law. Food waste is the largest component of Maine’s landfill waste and we as a state have missed our waste diversion targets, aiming for 50% recycling and composting and 5% per capita disposal reduction every five years. This bill would help us meet those goals. Additionally, reducing food waste is necessary to meet our climate goals.

Maine also has a high percentage of children living in food insecure households, the highest rate of child food insecurity in New England. This bill would prioritize food redistribution, helping to boost our struggling food banks, pantries, and meal programs.

To protect the health and environment of all Mainers, we need to move this bill forward. We urge the committee to vote “ought to pass” on LD 1065.