



Slingshot

53 Exchange Street, #200
Portland, ME 04101
slingshot.org

Testimony in Support of LD 1065

An Act Regarding the Reduction and Recycling of Food Waste

Eva Westheimer, Northern Region Lead Organizer | April 16th, 2025

Good morning Senator Tepler, Representative Doudera and Members of the Environment & Natural Resources Committee,

My name is Eva Westheimer, I am the Northern Region Lead Organizer with Slingshot. Slingshot is an environmental health and justice organization, we work alongside communities most impacted by environmental threats to take aim at polluters and build community power. We believe everyone deserves the right to breathe clean air, drink clean water, and live in healthy, vibrant communities, which is why we are testifying in support of LD 1065, an Act Regarding the Reduction and Recycling of Food Waste.

We have a waste management issue in Maine. Currently organics make nearly a quarter, the largest component, of Maine's landfill waste. Every other state in the northeast has some sort of restriction on landfilling of organics. Food winding up at a landfill is its least useful course. LD 1065 is critical to improving waste management in Maine and preserving landfill capacity. Looking at food waste from an environmental justice perspective it is important to think about several different factors:

Food Access and Redistribution

It is great that LD 1065 prioritizes edible food redistribution. Preventing good, edible, food from being wasted, and supporting people in gaining access to food is vital. Maine has the highest rate of child food insecurity in the Northeast, with 1 in 5 children living in food insecure households.

According to the Food Loss and Waste Generation Study done in collaboration with the ME DEP, approximately 361,000 tons of food loss and waste are generated annually in Maine¹. Vermont saw food donations nearly triple in 3 years after enacting their organics recycling law. Maine has the potential to divert so much good, edible food onto the plates of people who need it.

Human and Environmental Health

We work closely with community members who are highly impacted by the Juniper Ridge Landfill, the community group Don't Waste Maine, and others fighting landfill impacts throughout the State. LD 1065 would help mitigate unnecessary waste going into landfills.

¹

https://www.maine.gov/dep/waste/publications/documents/ME%20DEP%20Food%20Loss%20and%20Waste%20Generation%20Study_RRS_4.1.29.pdf

Maine has missed its waste diversion targets and this bill would support us in reaching those targets.

We know landfills have grave impacts on human health and the environment- ranging from PFAS leaching into water sources, methane emissions and more. Reducing food waste in landfills will support the reduction of methane emissions.

It is critical for LD 1065 to move forward in order to preserve landfill capacity and support all Mainers. We hope you take decisive action to protect our communities and environment by voting ought to pass. Thank you for considering my comments.