

Sarah White
Tremont
LD 493

Dear Members of the Health and Human Services Committee,

My name is Sarah White, a resident of Bernard, Maine. I write this testimony as a concerned homeowner in a rural community, as well as the chair of our town's sustainability committee.

Our town is a working waterfront community; a community of water sourced from wells; we have no municipal water system. Because of this, the quality of well water for each Tremont resident, is one of the aspects that concerns our town. Not only individual residences whose water source is a well, but also our town school water source which is a well. Thanks to the sharp minds of two scientists at the MDI Biolab, who studied the ramifications of PFAS at another school on Mt. Desert Island, MDI High School, and found similarities between PFAS contamination at the school and nearby residences to that school, our town K-8th Grade School was discovered to have unsafe levels of PFAS last year. This led to further testing in our community, including my own well. To my dismay, my well was found to have very high levels of PFAS, which prompted me to look into my home's history where I discovered a past of small engine work and repair with most of it done within 50 feet of the well.

I am also a substitute teacher at Tremont Consolidated School, and know how crucial it is for our children to have safe drinking water. Because of the state emphasis on PFAS awareness, our school's water was discovered and mitigated; and my own well water PFAS contamination was discovered so that I could have it mitigated.

It is important that this capability be mandated so that rural households, especially those who have wells as their water source, can have their wells tested for PFAS, for their safety's sake. Along with this, maximum contaminant levels need to be established for the most egregious perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances. Producers of products that have these substances must be required to indicate these on their ingredients labeling.

I urge you to pass these three bills: LD 493, LD 500, and LD 1326, to ensure an avenue for rural Mainers to have safe drinking water, free from the dangers of PFAS chemicals.