

Testimony of Madeline O’Neil

In support of LD 1326 *An Act to Protect the Drinking Water for Consumers of Certain Water Systems by Establishing Maximum Contaminant Levels for Certain Perfluoroalkyl and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances*

Before the Committee on Health and Human Services
Maine Legislature, Augusta, ME
April 22, 2025

Senator Brannigan, Representative Perry, and members of the Committee, thank you for considering my testimony. My name is Madeline O’Neil, and I have spent the last three years attending Colby College in Waterville, Maine. I am completing a double major in environmental science and biology with a specific focus on agriculture. I am also a certified personal trainer, helping Maine residents prioritize personal health and fitness. Therefore, I am passionate about providing people the opportunity to make good choices for their health, backed by science and supported by courses I have taken on environmental pollution, agriculture, and public health.

Therefore, I must testify in **support** LD 1326 because PFAS contamination in drinking water jeopardizes health by putting people at risk for cancer, reproductive effects, high cholesterol, and obesity.¹ This undermines other actions that people may be taking to improve their health and reduce their risk for disease. Mainers are exposed to PFAS from a wide variety of sources, including drinking water, personal care products, food and food packaging, and fire extinguishing foam, making it important to minimize exposure from each source so the accumulated exposure amount does not exceed the maximum acceptable level.

PFAS are widespread in Maine, spreading from ski wax, contaminated fields, and firefighting foam into our water bodies. At a PFAS conference held at Colby College in February, a researcher from the Aroostook Soil and Water Conservation District noted that every time there was a storm, PFAS from the Loring Air Force Base leached into the watershed. This raises concern for the continuous spread and non-localized threat of PFAS throughout the whole state of Maine.

To protect the health of Maine residents, please vote *ought to pass* on LD 1326. Thank you.

¹ Environmental Protection Agency. (2024, November 26). *Our Current Understanding of the Human Health and Environmental Risks of PFAS*. EPA.
<https://www.epa.gov/pfas/our-current-understanding-human-health-and-environmental-risks-pfas>