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President of the Senate

THE MAINE SENATE
132nd Legislature

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***Testimony of Senate President Mattie Daughtry 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 Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services***

Good afternoon, Senator Ingwersen, Representative Meyer, and esteemed members of the Health and Human Services Committee. My name is Mattie Daughtry and I am proud to serve as the President of the Maine State Senate, where I am honored to represent Senate District 23, which includes Brunswick, Freeport, Harpswell, Pownal, Chebeague Island, and part of Yarmouth.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak today in strong 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.” As Senate President and a legislator representing a district that has been profoundly affected by environmental crises, I stand before you not just as a policy maker but as a concerned citizen whose community has faced one of the largest PFAS spills in the nation earlier this year.

The urgency of this legislation cannot be overstated. For too long, the presence of PFAS has posed a grave threat to the health and safety of our communities. The spill in my community earlier this year at Brunswick Landing served as a critical wake-up call, exposing not only the devastating impacts of these toxic chemicals but also the inadequacies in our current regulatory framework to protect our drinking water.

LD 1326 seeks to rectify this by establishing maximum contaminant levels for certain PFAS in drinking water, thereby ensuring that our community water systems are safe for all consumers. It is imperative that we act with decisiveness and compassion, prioritizing the health of our citizens.

With the provisions included in this bill, we are ensuring that the Commissioner of Health and Human Services has the authority and flexibility to adapt to emerging science by lowering maximum levels of regulated PFAS or adding new substances as necessary. This is a proactive approach that acknowledges the continually evolving understanding of the health risks associated with these chemicals. Moreover, the requirement for water systems to monitor and report on PFAS levels is essential to fostering transparency and trust in our public health systems.

Beginning January 1, 2026, the mandated monitoring will be a vital step toward safeguarding our

communities and holding water systems accountable for the quality of the water they provide. Additionally, as we look toward January 1, 2029, when treatment and consumer notification requirements kick in, we will be laying the groundwork for a future where no individual has to worry about the safety of their drinking water.

As a legislator, I have witnessed firsthand the trauma and fear that PFAS contamination brings to families. The uncertainty that my constituents experienced following the AFFF spill was profound—no one should have to wonder whether their water is safe to drink. LD 1326 not only addresses this critical issue but also affirms our commitment to protecting public health and the environment for future generations.

I urge each of you to support LD 1326. Together, we can take meaningful action to protect our drinking water, uphold the health of our communities, and ensure that incidents like the one we experienced at Brunswick Landing never happen again.

Thank you for your time and consideration.