

To: Committee on Environment & Natural Resources, Maine State Legislature
From: Jackson Chadwick, Maine Youth for Climate Justice
Date: Monday, April 28, 2025



Re: Testimony in Opposition to L.D. 297: “An Act Regarding the Management of Oversized Bulky Waste from Wastewater Treatment Plants”

Dear Senator Tepler, Representative Doudera, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Environment & Natural Resources,

My name is Jackson Chadwick, and I am the Advocacy Director for Maine Youth for Climate Justice (MYCJ). Our statewide organization of 500 youth advocates for bold climate policy and a just transition from fossil fuels to sustainable, renewable energy. MYCJ connects youth with the Maine Legislature through educational programming and events, such as the Youth Day of Action on April 17th, which drew more than 150 youth to Augusta.

On behalf of MYCJ, I am testifying in opposition to L.D. 297: “An Act Regarding the Management of Oversized Bulky Waste from Wastewater Treatment Plants.”

This legislation would reopen a loophole that permitted out-of-state waste to be processed at Juniper Ridge Landfill (JRL) in Alton, Maine. Specifically, it would reverse the good work the 130th Maine Legislature did on L.D. 1639, which closed that loophole. L.D. 1639 passed the Legislature in 2022 with overwhelming bipartisan support.¹

As a climate justice organization, we’d be remiss if we did not address the environmental injustices the JRL inflicted on the surrounding communities, particularly the Penobscot Nation at Indian Island in Old Town. The Penobscot Nation is located just several miles from the landfill, and has been unjustly burdened by leachate leaking into the Penobscot River from JRL. Such leachate contains high concentrations of per- and polyfluoroalkyl (PFAS) substances. This reality disrupts the Penobscot Nation’s access to clean water for fishing, recreation, and more. Reopening JRL to out-of-state waste will only exacerbate the problem.

Additionally, L.D. 297 prioritizes the interests of a private company, Casella, over the health of the Maine public. For this reason and the reasons above, Maine Youth for Climate Justice strongly asks you to vote ought not to pass on L.D. 297.

Sincerely,

¹ “Roll-calls for LD 1639.” State of Maine Legislature.
<https://www.mainelegislature.org/LawMakerWeb/rollcalls.asp?ID=280080698>