

**Testimony to the Committee on Environment and Natural Resources
April 28, 2025**

Re: Support for LD 1604: An Act to Protect Groundwater and Surface Waters from Perfluoroalkyl and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances from Landfill Leachate

PFAS (“forever chemicals”) threaten human and environmental health. Exposure is linked to certain cancers, adverse reproductive and developmental effects, weakening of the immune system, increased cholesterol, and more. At present, Maine has no limits on PFAS disposal into the state’s waterways. Landfill leachate is collected, then either treated onsite or transported to a wastewater treatment plant. While this leachate is treated for some pollutants, it is not treated for PFAS before discharge. Yet in a January 2024 report, the DEP stated, “it is clear from the 25 landfills sampled that significant concentrations of PFAS are present at landfills and in landfill leachate that have the potential to impact groundwater and/or surface water in [the] vicinity of the landfills.”

LD 1604 seeks to address the PFAS risks from landfill leachate in several ways:

1. It requires wastewater treatment plants to report on the origin, volume, and final disposal or management of leachate they treat, and to make this information publicly available. *This information is essential for evaluating the PFAS situation Maine must deal with.*
2. It requires the DEP to set standards for effluent discharge of PFAS. *While there is no known safe level of exposure to PFAS, maximum standards provide an enforceable baseline to protect the public and the environment, and to hold polluters accountable.*
3. It mandates that no leachate collected from a landfill can be discharged unless it meets this new DEP standard. *Addressing PFAS contamination at this point is far more effective and less expensive than once it has reached groundwater and surface water.*
4. It requires landfills with leachate collection systems to provide the DEP with quarterly independent testing for PFAS. These results must be included in landfill annual reports. *Regular independent testing ensures that treatment systems are working and that facilities remain in compliance with limits on PFAS. Such oversight builds public trust and ensures that property owners can be fully informed about potential risks to their health and property values.*
5. It provides free PFAS testing of nearby residents’ private water supplies—on request and as frequently as desired—with the landfill licensee covering the cost of testing. *Each test costs \$250-\$500 at an accredited lab. Residents should not be responsible for this unexpected expense. This provision directly responds to local residents’ concerns about the safety of their drinking water, and will help guide mitigation efforts if needed.*

In summary, this bill is another among many needed to address Maine’s widespread PFAS problems. I write to express my strong support for its passage. Thank you for the opportunity to express my opinion.

Leslie J. Hudson
70 Forest Avenue
Orono, ME 04473
leshudson44@gmail.com