

JANE HERBERT
DAMARISCOTTA
LD 297

April 26, 2025

To: Committee on Environment and Natural Resources:

Senator Denise Tepler, Chair

Senator Stacy Brenner, Senator Joseph E. Martin

Against LD 297

Dear Honorable Committee Members:

Thank you for considering my testimony of why LD 297 ought not to pass.

It appears that Maine is once again facing a challenge with the corporate giant, Casella Waste Systems. LD 297 is a disingenuous work around worded to undermine previously passed legislation LD1639 which mandates Juniper Ridge Landfill be reserved for in-state waste only. As reported on a ABC channel 8 newscast in 2022, "Every Democratic and Republican Senator present supported the final bill, including Republican Rick Bennett, who described Massachusetts' having closed its own landfills and dumping trash here as "environmental colonialism."

The Goliath corporation Maine contracted to manage the state-owned Juniper Ridge landfill will be the beneficiary if LD297 is adopted. LD 297 wrongly redefines "in-state waste" to include "residue of residue", allowing parts of CDD from other states to be buried in Maine as long as some of it was first used for landfill cover. That's some fancy footwork and deceptive maneuvering. LD 297 would create a loophole for Casella to legally drive a parade of trucks filled with an avalanche of waste from out of state. There is a very real danger Maine could become a regional dump for New England.

The lion's share of Maine waste is landfilled in Penobscot County, namesake of our largest river and home of the Penobscot People. The toxic environmental burden on land, water and residents near landfills is well documented. As a resident of Lincoln County it is important for me to protest any thought of adding additional waste tonnage from out-of-state to be filled there.

Casella insists there is need for more CDD than Maine can supply to stabilize municipal solid waste but that is not in line with standard industry practices. Casella manages the landfill not state policy.

Exporting waste has been an accepted policy for decades but the painful result is washing up on shores and contaminating farmlands across the globe. We need to act now so Maine does not become Casella's cash cow and regional dump for New England.

LD 297 Benefits Casella, Not Maine, and I urge a unanimous "ought not to pass" mandate.

Thank you for considering my comments.

Respectfully,

Jane Herbert

Damariscotta, Maine