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TO: The Committee on Environment and Natural Resources, Maine State Legislature

Re: Support for the following Bill: LD 1786 "An Act to Require the Department of Environmental Protection to Provide Certain Information Regarding Perfluoroalkyl and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances to the Public and Private Drinking Water Well Owners"

Dear Chairperson Tepler, Chairperson Gramlich and Members of the Committee:

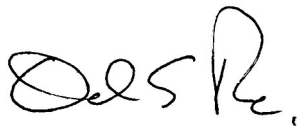
I am a long-time citizen of Brunswick, Maine, and as Professor of Chemistry and Biochemistry at Bowdoin College, have published many papers on the fate and effects of various pollutants on living environmental systems and the reporting of these. In addition, I have been the Town of Brunswick representative to the Restoration Advisory Board (RAB) since 2014 and a member of the Brunswick Area Citizens for a Safe Environment (BACSE) since 2012. As such, I have extensive experience with activities involving AFFF at the former Brunswick Naval Air Station (BNAS) and the parties involved; The Navy, the US Environmental Protection Agency, the Maine Department of Environmental Protection (MEDEP) and various civilian entities. With heightened public concern on PFAS issues at the former BNAS over the last year, I have been particularly active as a source of information and support for individuals, citizen groups, the Town of Brunswick and elected officials.

I am writing in strong support for bill LD 1786, which would establish much needed communication protocols for MEDEP to follow in communicating to homeowners, the results of PFAS testing in public and private drinking water wells.

Since the August, 2024 spill of PFOS-based aqueous film forming foam concentrate in Hangar 4, nearby off-base residents have been rightly concerned about the migration of PFAS residues into the aquifer supplying their private wells. Because the area around Hangar 4 is already a hotspot for PFOS in ground water, these residents have valid reasons for concern and well-testing has been ongoing by both the Navy and MEDEP. While we have no influence on how the Navy communicates results, we must ensure that the communication of well-testing results by MEDEP be done in a comprehensive and professional manner. It is not sufficient to tell a homeowner that "their well passed," or to say that it is "probably their septic tank." As with the communication of our medical records via our on-line patient portals, MEDEP needs to present the analytical results of well-testing for a given homeowner in a clear, respectful and comprehensive way, along with the clear presentation of the relevant State and Federal safety standards for PFAS in drinking water.

I have been involved with MEDEP in various ways since 1977. This agency has gifted and hard-working personnel. Public communication is always a problem with technical agencies. In this case, LD 1786 provides a valuable set of criteria for MEDEP to follow in their communication of PFAS test results to the public.

Sincerely yours,



David S. Page, Bowdoin College Professor of Chemistry and Biochemistry Emeritus
<https://www.bowdoin.edu/profiles/faculty/dpage/index.html>