

Testimony in Favor of Maine Bill LD 1786

Honorable Members of the Committee,

My name is Amy Self and I testify before you today as a distressed homeowner, impacted profoundly by the contamination of PFAS in my well water, due to the catastrophic AFFF chemical disaster that occurred at Brunswick Landing on August 19, 2024. Our well tested at levels surpassing the EPA standard of 4 parts per trillion (ppt) by more than double. Although the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) suggests that 20 ppt is considered safe, my family and I face a harsh reality—live with water that poses significant health risks.

Imagine waking up each morning, only to be greeted by the unsettling truth that the water flowing from your tap—water you rely on for drinking, cooking, and bathing—is contaminated. Each sip is accompanied by an agonizing fear that it might be harming you or your loved ones. This fear is not without merit; PFAS, commonly known as "forever chemicals," are associated with numerous health issues, including cancer, hormone disruption, and immune system damage.

When we received the 30-page test result from the DEP, accompanied by a letter, it advised that since my well test for PFAS was under 20 ppt, it was deemed safe, and the DEP does not recommend any treatment at this time. As a layperson, I had no prior knowledge of PFAS chemicals and was compelled to seek scientists to interpret the test report. Additionally, hours of my own research led to the chilling realization that our well was indeed poisoned, with contamination levels over 2.5 times the EPA recommendation of 4 ppt. We had to cease using our water immediately. No one should be using water at 4 ppt or above. Why then did the DEP tell me my well water was safe? I have included a copy of the letter sent to us from the DEP regarding our test result below for your reference.

The proposed Bill LD 1786 is an essential measure in addressing this critical situation. It mandates that the Department of Environmental Protection post the current federal Environmental Protection Agency standards or the state maximum contaminant level (MCL) for PFAS in drinking water, whichever is more stringent, on its publicly accessible website. This transparency is crucial for homeowners to comprehend the risks and be given current and accurate information about the real danger facing them along with resources and information about necessary remedial actions.

Furthermore, the bill requires the department to disseminate information regarding PFAS contamination by mail and email when it suspects contamination or upon homeowner request. This proactive communication ensures that homeowners are not left in the dark, as we often are, about the quality of the water entering our homes.

It also mandates that information be provided at the time of testing and reporting PFAS levels. This will ensure that homeowners are immediately informed of any risk, allowing us to take prompt actions to safeguard our families.

Living with contaminated water is a relentless struggle. The uncertainty and fear it fosters cannot be overstated. I plead with you to support LD 1786, a bill that promises not only transparency but also a measure of solace for homeowners like myself. We deserve to know the perils we face and have the information needed to protect our families. Thank you for considering my testimony and for taking steps toward ensuring the health and safety of all Mainers.



JANET T. MILLS
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION



MELANIE LOYZIM
COMMISSIONER

September 26, 2024

Mr. Douglas Self
260 Coombs Road
Brunswick, ME 04011

Re: Results from the Recent Testing of Your Water Supply at 260 Coombs Road, Brunswick

Dear Mr. Self:

This letter provides you with the results of the water test conducted on the sample collected from your property on September 10, 2024. The sample was analyzed by Pace Analytical Laboratory and tested for the presence of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS).

The Department of Health and Human Services has established an Interim Drinking Water Standard of 20 nanograms per liter (ng/L) for six PFAS compounds: PFOA, PFOS, PFNA, PFHpA, PFHxS and PFDA. The Department of Environmental Protection (Department) is applying these criteria for evaluation of PFAS compounds in private drinking water.

The results for the sample collected from your private well are below 20 ng/L for the six PFAS compounds; therefore, the Department does not recommend treatment at this time. The laboratory report, which includes the analysis results for your well water, is attached. If you are interested in additional information about these chemical compounds or the Department's Response to the AFFF release at the Brunswick Executive Airport, please feel free to visit our webpage located at:
<https://www.maine.gov/dep/projects/bnas/index.html>.

We appreciate your cooperation in the matter and want you to understand that our investigation on this topic is ongoing. The Department will contact you to request permission for a follow-up sample from your well in December 2024.

If you have questions regarding this report, please feel free to contact me at (207) 458-8839 or molly.king@maine.gov.

Sincerely,



Molly King
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Maine Department of Environmental Protection
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Sincerely,

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