



May 2nd, 2025

Joint Standing Committee on Environment and Natural Resources

RE: LD 1870, An Act to Establish a Climate Superfund Cost Recovery Program to Impose Penalties on Climate Polluters

Senator Tepler, Representative Doudera, and members of the Committee on Environment and Natural Resources,

My name is Olivia Griset, and I am the Executive Director at the Maine Environmental Education Association (MEEA). I'm writing to you in support of LD 1870, An Act to Establish a Climate Superfund Cost Recovery Program to Impose Penalties on Climate Polluters.

MEEA represents over 2,000 Maine educators—classroom teachers and community-based educators—who provide hands-on environmental and outdoor learning experiences for youth. Additionally, our youth-led Maine Environmental Changemakers program works with youth leaders across Maine who are passionate about climate justice. Our MEEA and our Changemakers network is a member of the Maine Youth for Climate Justice coalition and the Environmental Priorities Coalition.

As Mainers, we are already experiencing the devastating financial and emotional toll of climate change. Just last winter, climate-driven storms inflicted \$90 million in damage to our public infrastructure—and the cost to private property is likely far higher. These are not one-time events; they are part of a growing pattern fueled by fossil fuel emissions. The reality is clear: our communities, from coastal towns to inland cities, do not have the resources needed to protect people, property, and our way of life from the accelerating climate crisis.

This bill is a practical and just solution. The fossil fuel industry has known for decades about the harms caused by their products and continued to profit while sowing doubt and delaying action. In 2023—the hottest year on record—major oil companies made more than \$170 billion in profits. It is reasonable that these polluters contribute to the costs of the damage they've caused.

The Climate Superfund bill would ensure that Maine can better understand the true costs of climate adaptation and require the wealthiest and most responsible contributors to climate change to pay their fair share. This approach is grounded in the time-tested "polluter pays" principle, modeled after the federal Superfund law, which has stood firm in the face of legal challenges for decades. Importantly, similar legislation has already been enacted in Vermont and New York.

This bill would position Maine as a leader in fiscal responsibility and climate resilience. It sends a clear message: the burden of climate adaptation should not fall solely on taxpayers and future generations. Those who have profited the most from the crisis should be critical part of the solution.

On behalf of the Maine Environmental Education Association, I urge you to vote in favor of support LD 1870. Thank you for your leadership on this critical issue.