



**Maine Medical
Association**



**TESTIMONY OF MAINE MEDICAL ASSOCIATION,
MAINE OSTEOPATHIC ASSOCIATION,
MAINE PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION**

**In Support Of
LD 1870 - An Act to Establish a Climate Superfund Cost Recovery Program to Impose
Penalties on Climate Polluters**

Joint Standing Committee on Environment and Natural Resources
Room 216, Cross Building, Augusta, Maine
Monday, May 5, 2025

Good Morning, Senator Tepler, Representative Gramlich, and Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Environment and Natural Resources. On behalf of Maine Medical Association (MMA), Maine Osteopathic Association (MOA), and Maine Public Health Association (MPHA), we write in support of LD 1870 – An Act to Establish a Climate Superfund Cost Recovery Program to Impose Penalties on Climate Polluters.

MMA is a professional organization representing more than 4,000 physicians, residents, and medical students in Maine. MMA's mission is to support Maine physicians, advance the quality of medicine in Maine, and promote the health of all Maine people. MOA is a professional organization representing more than 1,200 osteopathic physicians, residents, and medical students in Maine whose mission is to serve the Osteopathic profession of the State of Maine through a coordinated effort of professional education, advocacy, and member services to ensure the availability of quality osteopathic health care to the people of this State. MPHA is the state's oldest, largest, and most diverse association for public health professionals. MPHA represents more than 850 individuals and 70 organizational members across the state. MPHA's mission is to advance the health of all people and places in Maine.

Health professionals are responsible for helping to identify health risks associated with environmental exposures; educate patients, consumers and communities about these risks; and advocate for policies that support a healthier population. Environmental health and human health are intertwined. For example, air and water pollution from fossil fuel-burning power plants and vehicle tailpipes contribute to lung and heart disease.¹ Higher temperatures from a changing climate contribute to heat-related illness and vector-borne disease.² Extreme weather events can cause power outages that disrupt electronic medical equipment or refrigeration needed to keep medications cold.³ Environmental toxins and plastic pollution are associated with cancer and endocrine disruption.⁴

There are myriad examples demonstrating the relationship between human and environmental health. As health professionals, we must pay attention to these relationship, understanding the underlying causes of illnesses that we try to prevent – and may end up treating. We must also advocate for policy solutions that improve environmental health and thus reduce the human health costs and burden of these conditions.

Our organizations support LD 1870 because it holds polluting industries accountable for their contributions to worsening environmental and human health. By requiring the most significant

corporate polluters to pay their fair share for the damages their industries cause, Mainers can be compensated for the care and resources they need to adapt.

Thank you for considering the thoughts of Maine's physicians and public health experts. We hope you will support LD 1870. Thank you.

¹ Kopel J, Brower GL. Impact of fossil fuel emissions and particulate matter on pulmonary health. *Proc (Bayl Univ Med Cent)*. 2019 Aug 5;32(4):636-638.

² U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. [Climate and health: Vector-borne diseases](#). March 2, 2024

³ Ebi KL, Vanos J, Baldwin JW, Bell JE, Hondula DM, Errett NA, Hayes K, Reid CE, Saha S, Spector J, Berry P.

Extreme weather and climate change: Population health and health system implications. *Annu Rev Public Health*. 2021 Apr 1;42:293-315.

⁴ Baj J, Dring JC, Czezelewski M, Kozyra P, Forma A, Flieger J, Kowalska B, Buszewicz G, Teresiński G. Derivatives of plastics as potential carcinogenic factors: The current state of knowledge. *Cancers (Basel)*. 2022 Sep 24;14(19):4637.