

Testimony for Committee on Environment and Natural Resources on LD 297: An Act Regarding the Management of Oversized Bulky Waste from Waste Water Treatment Plants”

Honorable Chair, members of the Committee, and fellow advocates,

Although voters in Maine thought they successfully banned the import of out-of-state waste, our legislators are currently considering LD 297, “An Act regarding the Management of Oversized Bulky Waste from Wastewater Treatment Plants”. This act would permit significant amounts of Oversized Bulky Waste that were generated in other states to be reclassified and ultimately disposed of in our Juniper Ridge Landfill (JRL). That waste can include old appliances, furniture, or electronics likely to release toxic substances such as lead, mercury, and PFAS into the environment.

LD 297 would let Casella dump 25,000 tons/year of out-of-state waste at Juniper Ridge Landfill for another three years. This would completely re-open the loophole, redefining out-of-state as from “in-state”. LD 297 undermines Maine’s waste reduction and recycling goals.

Maine residents should not have to bear the burden of other states’ waste. Our landfills are projected to be at capacity in less than 10 years. Let’s focus on improving waste management here in Maine rather than exacerbating problems by importing out-of-state waste.

If the real problem that we are trying to solve is how to dispose of our PFAS contaminated sludge then let’s invest in technology and processes to remove the PFAS and de-water the sludge so we do not rely on out-of-state bulky waste to shore up our landfills.

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