

Testimony of Sarah Woodbury, Vice President of Policy
and Advocacy, Defend Our Health
In Support of LD 1928, “An Act to Prohibit Lodging Establishments
from Providing Single-use Plastic Containers”
Before the Environment and Natural Resources Committee
May 12, 2025

Senator Tepler, Representative Doudera, and members of the Environment and Natural Resources Committee. My name is Sarah Woodbury. I am the Vice President of Policy and Advocacy for Defend Our Health. Defend Our Health’s mission is to make sure that everyone has equal access to safe food and drinking water, healthy homes, and products that are toxic-free and climate-friendly. I am here to testify in support LD 1928 “An Act to Prohibit Lodging Establishments from Providing Single-use Plastic Containers” which would prohibit lodging establishments from providing personal health or beauty products in small single-use plastic containers to persons staying in a lodging establishment or within bathrooms shared by the public and guests of the lodging establishment.

LD 1928 will help reduce the amount of single-use plastic being produced and used. We keep hearing that the solution to the plastics problem is recycling but the truth is that isn’t happening. Only about 6% of plastic waste gets recycled while the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development projects that plastic production will triple by the year 2060 unless policy action is taken. That’s bad for our environment, our climate and bad for our health. Recycling alone is not enough to solve the plastics crisis. We need to address the source of contamination and that means making adjustments that can go a long way--switching from single-use to large bottles, for example, can reduce plastic waste from hotel toiletries by more than 50%.

Maine has been a leader in banning uses of unnecessary and problematic plastic including plastic bags, plastic balloon releases, and polystyrene single-use food containers (with some exceptions). LD 1928 will help us continue this leadership. But we will not be alone. New York, Washington, Illinois, and California have already passed similar laws, and Oregon is considering doing so this year. On top of that, major hotel chains, including Marriott, Hyatt, and Hilton have already made or committed to making the switch to larger toiletry bottles.

Source reduction is the solution. We need to move away from uses of plastic wherever we can. LD 1928 starts small by phasing out just a few plastic items. The focus is on plastic for which there are better alternatives going forward.

LD 1928 is a goodstep for both the health and environment of all Mainers. We urge the committee to pass LD 1928. Thank you.