

Ralph Keyes
Brunswick
LD 2115

TO: Committee on Environment and Natural Resources
RE: Support for LD 2115

Senator Tepler, Representative Doudera, and Members of the Committee:

I ask you to please vote “ought to pass” on LD 2115, An Act to Protect Private Wells from Hazardous Substances. This bill, should it become law, would give authority and provide dedicated resources for the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to test, monitor, and respond to hazardous contamination of private drinking water wells.

I am a resident of Brunswick. I live to the west of Brunswick Executive Airport, site of the PFAS-laden aqueous firefighting foam spill of August 2024. Prior to this spill we knew there were Brunswick Naval Air Station-sourced contaminants in the local aquifers that impact areas to the southeast and north of the former air base, and we understood that these toxins impact the Androscoggin River/Merrymeeting Bay and the marine estuaries of Harpswell Cove. The 2024 spill also impacted these areas, and now we know that it has contaminated well water at Mere Creek Golf Course, out of the previously known impact area and adjacent to my neighborhood.

In response to the discovery of contaminants at the golf course, testing was conducted on three adjacent private wells, but the public has not been informed of the results of these tests, nor were tests offered to property owners beyond these three private wells. Many area residents are unaware of the potential threat to their wells, are aware of these threats but assume they have “flushed out” and things are now safe, or they simply cannot fit these tests into their household budgets. Some of my neighbors and my family have conducted tests at our expense. Thankfully these tests have been negative for toxic contaminants, but we wish to see more comprehensive follow-up testing and a systematic assessment of all the aquifers that neighbors to the former naval air base rely on for drinking water.

The Midcoast Regional Redevelopment Authority (MRRA) and the US Navy have pointed fingers at each other, claiming the other entity is responsible for the pollution. We need a system whereby Maine DEP can conduct the testing, assess the threats to area residents, and then work with the Navy, MRRA and the US EPA to assure area residents’ health and safety is addressed. I believe LD2115 could accomplish this. I ask that LD2115 be passed so that my neighbors and I, and residents anywhere in Maine who are threatened by these types of environmental incidents can be assured that the State is assisting us in safeguarding our health and safety.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

Ralph Keyes
Brunswick, ME