



Committee on Environment & Natural Resources
% Legislative Information Office
100 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333

February 25, 2026

RE: LD 474, An Act to Establish a Stewardship Program for Primary and Rechargeable Batteries

Dear Sen. Tepler, Rep. Doudera, and Members of the Environment & Natural Resources Committee:

My name is Anthony Erwin and I am Maine Audubon's Policy Advocate. Since 1843, Maine Audubon has worked to conserve Maine wildlife and wildlife habitat by engaging people in education, conservation, and action. On behalf of Maine Audubon and our 30,000 members, supporters, and volunteers, we thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of the sponsor's amendment to LD 474, *An Act to Establish a Stewardship Program for Primary and Rechargeable Batteries*.

Maine's ecosystems—its coasts, rivers, forests, and mountains—are the lifeblood of our state. They provide critical habitat for wildlife, support recreational and commercial industries, and define the character of our communities. However, these natural systems are frequently impacted by pollution. One source of pollution is due to the disposal of batteries. These batteries are made up of toxic materials, and without a proper recycling program these materials can leach out of Maine's transfer stations and solid waste facilities and into our waterways and other natural environments.

In addition to the impacts that the disposal of batteries have on Maine, there are also global impacts that must be recognized too. Many of these batteries include precious metals that are environmentally taxing to harvest and refine. In order to better conserve these materials and reduce the need for new mining for precious metals, it is imperative that we begin to recycle these products.

The sponsor's amendment to LD 474 would help address the environmental concerns associated with the disposal of batteries. This bill aims to expand the existing product stewardship program to include primary (single-use) and small-to-medium format rechargeable consumer batteries, requiring producers to participate in a statewide take-back program. By implementing this program, Maine can reduce its exposure to toxic materials and assist in the global effort to limit the need for precious metals. Importantly, in New England, Maine would be joining Connecticut and Vermont in enacting an extended producer responsibility program that covers both single-use and rechargeable batteries once again showing that Maine is committed to a more sustainable future.

Maine Audubon strongly believes that LD 474 will help mitigate the environmental impacts of battery disposal and urges the committee to vote ought to pass. Thank you for your leadership and commitment to protecting the natural resources of Maine.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Anthony Erwin". The signature is written in a cursive style with a light blue shadow effect behind it.

Anthony Erwin
Policy Advocate