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Testimony on
L.D. 289, “An Act to Require the State to Purchase Farms Contaminated with Perfluoroalkyl and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances”

Presented by
Representative Wayne R. Parry
District 140

Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry
Monday, February 13, 2023

Good morning, Senator Ingwersen, Representative Pluecker, and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry:

I am State Representative Wayne R. Parry, and I proudly represent District 140, Arundel, Dayton, and a portion of Lyman. It is an honor to appear before you today for the purpose of introducing L.D. 289, “*An Act to Require the State to Purchase Farms Contaminated with Perfluoroalkyl and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances.*”

I have brought this bill forward as a lifeline to those farms that have been destroyed because of contamination from PFA chemicals. This is not a mandate on the farms to sell -- that choice is up to them.

Let me be very clear. These farms were contaminated from PFAS, but only after the STATE of MAINE environmental agencies said it was okay to spread these substances on their fields. The State said it was SAFE.

What I have done here is use current law and allocations we made in 2021 to give that lifeline to these farms sooner rather than force these farms to have to wait five to 10 years for actual help.

Current law already allows the buying and selling of agriculture land contaminated by PFAS (Sec.1 7 MRSA §320-K, sub-4D) with these allocations made.

My worry was, when we started down this road, the farms that were destroyed would become pawns and would be left behind. That is exactly what has happened. We appropriated

\$60,000,000, and the farms that were destroyed have received little. We have talked, but not directly helped these farms.

This bill does that; however, as I said, this is a lifeline to those farms if they wish to take it.

I believe the money we have already allocated should go to the farmers first, not for more government bureaucracy first.

IT IS TIME TO HELP THESE FARMS AND FARMERS NOW – not five to 10 years from now, which is usually how government works. Most farmers are older and do not have time to wait years for help.

I have given one way to help these farmers here. If the committee thinks there is a better way or method, I am fine with that. My big thing is **HELPING THESE FARMERS NOW!** That is why I propose the nine-month time window.

Some of the numbers look big, but let us remember that these farms have lost millions of dollars. Some have not been able to sell anything from their farms in over the last five years. **THEY HAVE BEEN DESTROYED.**

LET US HELP THESE FARMERS NOW!

Thank you for your consideration. I am happy to answer any questions you may have at this time.