



TESTIMONY NF/NA LD 1009

Environment and Natural Resources Committee

**Testimony of Shelby Wright, Eastern Region Manager of Engagement
Casella**

March 21, 2023

Senator Brenner, Representative Gramlich, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Environment and Natural Resources, my name is Shelby Wright, and I am the Eastern Region Manager of Engagement for Casella.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak Neither For/Nor Against LD 1009 “An Act Regarding the Reduction and Recycling of Food Waste” as amended.

Casella recognizes, as one of our company’s fundamental values, the need to divert waste material to the highest and best possible use - supporting the solid waste hierarchy and preserving valuable landfill space for the people of Maine.

Overall, the amended language of LD 1009 recognizes the dynamic nature of the solid waste arena and the need to reduce barriers to achieve reduction at the first point of generation, in particular the “low hanging fruit” of food waste and food scraps.

Broadened terminology such as “Food Rescue” and “Food Rescue Organization” and will ensure the calculated reduction of food waste from the overall waste stream is open to other means of diversion other than just composting alone. Other Northeast states have passed similar legislation and are seeing remarkable percentages of “Food Rescue”.

It will be important to collect market data on the amount of food waste tonnages produced in the State. The private sector must work hard to develop the expansive and statewide infrastructure needed to meet the goals of LD 1009 as the volume of material falling under this mandate has yet to be determined by a third-party audit of the waste stream.

Financial support for the development and implementation of much needed food waste diversion infrastructure is needed. Funding and planning for a robust and accessible system throughout each region of the State is in order to ensure that meaningful reduction and recycling of food waste and scraps can be achieved in the short and long term.

Casella is interested in learning more about the goals of the State concerning the reduction and recycling of food waste and areas in which waste management and recycling companies can participate.

Thank you. I welcome the opportunity to answer any questions.

Shelby Wright
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