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STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION



MELANIE LOYZIM
COMMISSIONER

**TESTIMONY OF
Melanie Loyzim, Commissioner**

MAINE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

SPEAKING IN OPPOSITION TO

**L.D. 1433, An Act to Exclude Pegmatites from the Definition of "Metallic Mineral"
Sponsored by Representative Soboleski**

**L.D. 1471, An Act to Amend Provisions of the Maine Metallic Mineral Mining Act
Sponsored by Senator Bennett**

**L.D. 1476, An Act to Amend the Definition of "Metallic Mineral" in the Maine
Metallic Mineral Mining Act
Sponsored by Senator Keim**

**L.D. 1495, Resolve, Establishing the Commission to Study the Role of Critical
Minerals as a Resource in the State
Sponsored by Representative Crafts**

**L.D. 1508, An Act to Ensure a Strategic Approach to Maine's Energy Transition by
Imposing a Moratorium on Lithium Mining
Sponsored by Representative O'Neil**

**L.D. 1564, An Act to Eliminate Metallic Mineral Mining Activities Without a Permit
Sponsored by Representative Milliken**

**BEFORE THE JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE
ON
ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

DATE OF HEARING:

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Senator Brenner, Representative Gramlich, and members of the Committee, I am Melanie Loyzim, Commissioner of the Department of Environmental Protection, speaking in opposition to each of mining bills being heard today, with the exception of L.D. 1363.

The Department recommends that only careful and narrow changes should be made to Maine's Metallic Mineral Mining Act, to support environmentally responsible extraction of minerals needed for modern technology. Maine's current law is very restrictive, and the Department expects that any mining activity licensed and conducted under the law will not contaminate ground or surface waters, will not unreasonably impact protected natural resources, and will not adversely affect public health. Neither a moratorium as proposed in L.D. 1508 nor a Commission as proposed in L.D. 1495 are necessary. Additionally, the Department has adequate authority to regulate exploration activities, and requiring a full mining permit as proposed in L.D. 1564 would unnecessarily impede characterization of mineral deposits. L.D. 1471 would add a variety of new restrictions and review criteria to the law. The Department does not have adequate information about the projected environmental benefit of these requirements to assess them.

The Department also recommends against the categorical exemptions for specific minerals proposed in L.D. 1433 and 1476. Deposits in different areas of the state will pose different environmental risks, and processing metallic minerals poses different risks than extraction. Exempting a particular type of rock from the Mining Act exempts all activities with that rock, from manual removal in a quarry to operation of a processing facility that produces wet tailings. Narrower, specific exemptions for lower risk activities are more appropriate, such as the exemption proposed in L.D. 1363 for manufacturing cement with limestone.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony. I am available to answer questions of the Committee, both now and at work session.