

Good morning Senate Chair Stacy Brenner, House Chair Lori Gramlich, and Joint Standing Committee on Environment and Natural Resources.

My name is Kim Lindlof and I'm the president and CEO of the Mid-Maine Chamber of Commerce, which represents 23 communities in southern Somerset, northern Kennebec, and western Waldo counties, and approximately 625 businesses and nonprofits in the greater Waterville area. I am also a proud resident of Fairfield. I'm here today to testify in support of LD 1214.

As I mentioned, I live in Fairfield, the PFAS capital of the US. Let's face it—this PFAS situation is emotional. Fairfield, I get it. There is a lot of confusion, misinformation, and fear around PFAS and the potential harm that may come to those exposed to these substances. Not all PFAS are the same, but in the fury of last year's concerns and proposed legislation, all types of PFAS and PFOAs got thrown together in an attempt to do something to make Mainers safe. Maine is the first state in the nation to pass a ban on products containing PFAs. In fact, Maine has passed legislation in advance of the federal government. Because of the uncertainty and lack of federal guidance and understanding on this issue, the DEP has struggled to write rules and guidance for business around PFAS and PFOS in manufacturing and the sale of products by Maine businesses.

As often happens, laws are passed with the best intentions to take care of Maine people. It is the unintended consequences that are unforeseen, or information that was not provided that comes to light after the fact that we are forced to contend with now. Testing of every single product that is sold in Maine for PFAS is completely unrealistic. It will be expensive; I cannot imagine that my small business members in particular will have the bandwidth to sustain testing thereby forcing them out of business. If you think about the places that you shop,

hospitals that you frequent, your workplace – imagine the undertaking it would be, not to mention the expense that would be incurred by these businesses and nonprofit organizations, to test. As typically happens, those expenses would need to be passed on to the consumer, thus driving up prices. And that will only impact the elderly and those struggling to begin with. In short, it would hurt the neediest among us, and drive businesses out of business.

Moreover, unless this LD is enacted, providing more common sense into this process, I would argue that this would be a significant deterrent to business attraction. Businesses want to grow and expand in a welcoming and sustaining environment. We need to provide that if our economy is to grow.

The state of Maine is therefore in a unique position. If we're going to be first in the nation, then let's be excellent. We do not have to make a choice between protecting the health of Maine citizens and retaining jobs and strengthening the economy. LD 1214 allows us to slow down and get this right. We need to act on fact, understand the differences between long-chain and short-chain PFAS, and put guidance in place that does not cripple our business but also protects our citizens. We can become the model that the federal government and other states look up to as best practice. Let's enact this legislation so that we can do just that as opposed to the alternative where other states look to us as what not to do.

Thank you for your time and consideration.