

Testimony of Lani Graham, MD, MPH  
Freeport, Maine

**IN SUPPORT OF LD 75**

**An Act to Establish Maximum Contaminant Levels Under the State's Drinking Water Rules to Prohibit Certain Perfluoroalkyl and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances**

**Sponsored by Senator Richard Bennett**

**Before Health and Human Services Committee, April 28, 2023**

Good morning, Senator Baldacci, Representative Meyer, and Members of the Committee. My name is Lani Graham. I am a family practice physician and former Chief Public Health officer for Maine. I served on the Governor's task force to consider Maine's approach to dealing with the chemical family known as PFAS (perfluoroalkyl substances) which completed its work in 2019.

Over the last few years, I have been very involved in helping to address the contamination of Maine's land and water by the PFAS chemical family. I really like this bill for three reasons and couldn't resist offering some brief testimony in support of it.

First, this bill is needed to bring Maine in line with the latest scientific thinking on the dangers posed to human health by this family of chemicals. The drinking water standard for Maine is currently too high and could result in suggesting to Maine people that PFAS is less dangerous to human health than we now know.

Second, I was directly involved with testifying to this legislature about the need to set the current Maine PFAS drinking water standard of 20 parts per trillion. At the time the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) had set a guidance standard of 75 parts per trillion. We knew from the research that this was too high, but our recommended level of 20 parts per trillion was considered somewhat radical and we were questioned about the challenge to Maine people of having a standard so low. Since then, as often happens as research progresses, we have

learned that rather than being too low, our recommended standard was too high. The EPA has now set a standard of non-detectible for this family. That is the nature of research on toxic chemicals. I have never heard of an instance where doing more research resulted in the finding that that the chemical was less toxic than previously thought.

Third, as this bill indicates, this family needs to be treated as a class, rather than trying to set standards for each member. There are thousands of family members and none of them belong on our land or in our water.

Thank you for your attention. I would be pleased to answer any questions you might have.