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Testimony in SUPPORT of LD 1660

An Act to Protect Maine from So-Called "Advanced Recycling"
Dana Colihan, Co-Executive Director | May 8th, 2023

Senator Brenner, Representative Gramlich, and Members of the Environment & Natural Resources Committee.

My name is Dana Colihan, and I am co-executive director of Slingshot. I'm testifying in support of LD 1660, an Act to Protect Maine from So-Called Advanced Recycling. At Slingshot we envision a world where everyone can live, work, and play in communities that are safe, healthy, and sustainable, which is why we are testifying in support of this bill.

Whether your community is facing polluted water, a leaking landfill or air pollution from oil tanks in your backyard, you deserve to know the facts, make your voice heard, and create the changes you want to see. Slingshot is an environmental justice organization, working alongside communities most impacted by environmental health threats to take aim at polluters and build community power.

Through this work, we have witnessed the harm that poor oversight of waste management facilities has on our communities and environment. We need to ensure new so-called solutions are rigorously examined and regulated prior to implementation.

However, the fossil fuel industry wants to push laws that restrict opportunities for public participation, exempt them from standard reporting requirements, and make it easier to build these polluting facilities. Ensuring meaningful involvement with the respect of the development, implementation, and enforcement of our environmental laws, regulations, and policies is *the* EPA's definition of Environmental Justice. Thus, pursuing workarounds and intentional exclusion to participation is injustice—especially when advanced recycling facilities are often located in poor, working class, and communities of color.

We need to pass LD 1660 to protect Maine from the dangers these technologies pose. Advanced recycling facilities should not be able to skirt the notice, comment, and permitting requirements that apply to all solid waste facilities in the state. Maine designed these requirements to protect our communities and protect our environment.

We also need to be clear that so-called "advanced recycling" is not recycling nor is incineration or waste-to-energy facilities. At a time when we need to be pursuing real zero waste solutions, we should not be creating opportunities to invest in false solutions. We should not be creating opportunities to promote 'recycling' that is just burning plastic. This is why we also support the amendment to clarify that the creation of hazardous chemicals by any means, should also not be defined as recycling.

Please be decisive in protecting the people of Maine and our environment by supporting LD 1660. Thank you.