



Solutions for a
Toxic-Free Tomorrow

Testimony of Sarah Woodbury, Vice President of Policy and Advocacy, Defend Our Health
In SUPPORT of LD 210, "An Act Making Unified Appropriations and Allocations from the
General Fund and Other Funds for the Expenditures of State Government and Changing
Certain Provisions of the Law Necessary to the Proper Operations of State Government for the
Fiscal Years Ending June 30, 2025, June 30, 2026 and June 30, 2027"
Before the Appropriations and Financial Affairs Committee
February 6, 2025

Good morning, Senator Rotundo, Representative Gattine and members of the Appropriations and Financial Affairs Committee. My name is Sarah Woodbury. I am the Vice President of Policy and Advocacy for Defend Our Health. Defend Our Health works to make sure everyone has equal access to safe food, safe drinking water, healthy homes and toxic-free, climate-friendly products. I am here to testify in support to LD 210, "An Act Making Unified Appropriations and Allocations from the General Fund and Other Funds for the Expenditures of State Government and Changing Certain Provisions of the Law Necessary to the Proper Operations of State Government for the Fiscal Years Ending June 30, 2025, June 30, 2026 and June 30, 2027"

LD 210 includes funding on page ^{A242} ~~A26~~ for two new positions. An "Environmental Specialist III position and one Environmental Specialist IV position and provides funding for related All Other costs to support the efforts of the Prevention of Perfluoroalkyl and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances Pollution, Public Law 2023, chapter 630". These positions will be used to help support the important work of the Safer Chemicals program under the DEP.

Perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances, or PFAS are a man-made class of so-called "forever chemicals" which don't break down and remain in our body and in the environment for years. These chemicals are hazardous to human health and the environment. Maine has passed many groundbreaking policies for the source reduction and mitigation of PFAS contamination. One such law, the PFAS products law, requires the phase-out of toxic PFAS in numerous consumer product categories. The department responsible for this and many other important laws passed in Maine like the Kids Safe Products Act (KSPA) is the above-mentioned safer chemicals program. This program is responsible for the implementation and continued management of of the PFAS products law and several important toxics reductions programs. The program has been woefully understaffed for years and desperately needs new positions to help make sure these programs are implemented effectively to help protect the health and environment of all Mainers

We urge the committee to support these two positions under the DEP's budget. And, while toxics reduction s the main focus of our work with the DEP, we would also just like to say that we are in support of the DEP getting more staff in general. We have worked with several DEP staffers over the years, and they do great work, but they need additional help. Maine has been a leader when it comes to both toxics and environmental issues and to continue that leadership, we need a department that is fully staffed. And those staff people should be paid a living wage.



We recognize the budget is tight but there are options available to increase revenue streams, including making sure that the wealthy and large corporations pay their fair share. We urge the committee to support these and other positions in the DEP budget by voting "ought to pass" on LD 210.

Thank you for your time