



Solutions for a
Toxic-Free Tomorrow

Testimony of Sarah Woodbury, Vice President of Policy and Advocacy, Defend Our Health
In SUPPORT of LD 130 "An Act to Establish the PFAS Response Program and to Modify the
Fund To Address PFAS Contamination" before the Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry
Committee
February 6, 2025

Good morning, Senator Talbot Ross, Representative Pluecker and members of the Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry 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 130 "An Act to Establish the PFAS Response Program and to Modify the Fund To Address PFAS Contamination"

Maine farmers have been some of the hardest hit by Maine's PFAS contamination crisis. Farmers have had to deal with loss of income, possible health impacts, mental health impacts due to stress and anxiety, and in some cases, farmers have had to completely shut down their farm. Recognizing that the state needed to step in and provide assistance, in 2022 the Governor and the legislature supported \$60M dollars in the budget to help the Department of Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry provide resources to farmers who have been impacted by PFAS contamination. As part of the directive to help make sure that the funding was utilized appropriately, a PFAS advisory committee was set up comprised of legislators from both sides of the aisle, farmers, researchers, and department staff. That advisory committee has spent the past 2 plus years working to set up the PFAS fund programs and guidelines to help farmers and spend the appropriated funds wisely. The PFAS response and PFAS Fund programs are incredibly effective resources that are helping farmers all across the state.

LD 130 will formalize the existing PFAS Response Program under title 7, allowing the Department to continue doing the good work of helping impacted farmers. Additionally, it will allow the Department, through rulemaking, to set maximum contaminant levels for PFAS in a variety of farm products. This is incredibly important. Right now, there is uncertainty for many PFAS-impacted farmers. They are unsure if their products are safe to sell because there are no standards and guidelines for PFAS in farm products. It will also assure the public that the food that they are consuming from Maine farmers is safe. The rulemaking process will allow for a transparency in setting the standards and allow scientists, health experts, and the public, including impacted farmers, to have a voice in the process. And most importantly, LD 130 will ensure continued support for affected farmers and Maine's agricultural community without requiring additional funding.

We urge the committee to support this bill to maintain vital assistance for Maine's agricultural community by voting "ought to pass" on LD 130.

Thank you for your time