

Testimony Adam Nordell in SUPPORT of LD 130  
An Act to Establish the PFAS Response Program and to Modify the Fund To Address PFAS  
Contamination

Good morning, Senator Talbot-Ross, Representative Pluecker and distinguished members of the Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry Committee,

My name is Adam Nordell. I am a campaign manager for Defend Our Health and a PFAS impacted farmer. I also served on two sub-committees which helped draft rules to govern DACF's PFAS Fund. Please accept my testimony in support of LD 130.

DACF staff have now identified more than 80 sludge spread farms where PFAS contamination exceeds soil screening standards and/or Maine's drinking water standard. Of those farms, a small handful have been forced out of business by the contamination. That financial risk could easily extend to all impacted farms in our state. Thanks to the hard work of DACF staff, the vast majority of these impacted farms have been able to pivot and responsibly continue operating.

DACF has helped farmers conduct soil, water, crop & livestock sampling. The Department has made investments in equipment and infrastructure to help the farms produce low risk crops. DACF has delivered clean irrigation water as a short term support while investing in high volume filtration and new wells. DACF has provided PFAS-free hay to farmers whose fields are contaminated and identified successful strategies to get the PFAS out of beef and dairy herds.

There's more work to do. We know that PFAS do not break down in the environment, and as such, they will remain a risk for Maine's farms far into the future. We know that the Department is not yet working with all the contaminated farms. For example, DEP's PFAS investigation excludes numerous farms spread with composted sludge. The investigation does not include farms impacted by AFFF fire fighting foam, but the Department of Defense has identified 53 Maine farms at risk of contamination. On one of those sites, groundwater levels exceed 80,000 parts per trillion (ppt) for the chemical PFOS alone. Maine's safe drinking water standard is 20 ppt, and the national drinking water standard is 4 ppt. If we are invested in the safety of our food supply and the health of Maine's farming community, we should pass LD 130 so DACF can continue working with all impacted farmers.

I especially appreciate the language authorizing the Department to work with CDC to establish maximum limits on PFAS in foods based on updated understanding of the chemicals' toxicology. Impacted farmers can use these to demonstrate to their customers that they have succeeded in producing food that is under the threshold, and therefore safe for everyone to enjoy.

The committee should support DACF's ongoing efforts to mitigate the risks posed by PFAS to our farming community by passing LD 130.

Thank you for your consideration

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