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THE MAINE SENATE
132nd Legislature

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**Joint Standing Committee on Environment and Natural Resources on
LD 827, An Act to Allow the Sale of Polymer-coated Cookware That Is Authorized for
Food Contact by the United States Food and Drug Administration
March 17, 2025**

Senator Tepler, Representative Doudera and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Environment and Natural Resources, my name is Jeff Timberlake and I represent the people of Senate District 17 which includes parts of Androscoggin and Kennebec Counties. I am here today to present LD 827 and ask for your support.

As someone who was in the appliance business for years, I know firsthand how difficult it would be to navigate the restrictions that the current law imposes. Had the current PFAS law been in place during my time in that industry, we would have struggled to continue selling products that our customers relied on—products that were not only safe but necessary for everyday cooking and food preparation.

LD 827 seeks a reasonable and science-based amendment to Maine's existing restrictions on per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) in cookware. This bill does not eliminate the prohibition on PFAS-containing cookware but instead clarifies that cookware containing specific, FDA-approved fluoropolymers should not be subject to an overly broad ban.

The FDA has long authorized these fluoropolymers for food contact use. These materials have been used safely in cookware for decades and are distinct from the PFAS compounds that pose environmental or health concerns. Fluoropolymers are:

- Stable and durable – They do not degrade under normal use or at the end of their lifecycle.
- Non-water-soluble and non-bioaccumulative – Unlike other PFAS, they do not break down into harmful byproducts in the environment.
- Essential for performance and safety – They provide non-stick surfaces that reduce the need for cooking oils, making food preparation safer and healthier.

Additionally, the current law's broad wording could unintentionally prohibit internal components in cookware that are not even part of the cooking surface—such as electrical components or heat-resistant materials that rely on these chemicals for safety and durability. These restrictions create

unnecessary hurdles for manufacturers while failing to address the actual concerns regarding PFAS exposure.

I want to address a question that I anticipate will be raised: Why not pursue a Currently Unavoidable Use (CUU) Authorization instead of this bill?

The industry is actively working on a CUU Authorization on a parallel track to this legislation. While a CUU authorization would be welcome, this bill is the only opportunity for certainty as Maine's cookware portion of the PFAS ban comes into effect in 2026. A CUU process will take time, and businesses need clear and predictable guidelines now in order to adjust product planning and compliance efforts.

This approach is not unique to Maine—Connecticut and Rhode Island have recognized the need for similar clarifications in their PFAS laws and have introduced legislation to make these clarifications. Maine can ensure that we are making smart, science-backed policy decisions that protect consumers and businesses while maintaining our commitment to environmental safety.

LD 827 provides necessary clarity in Maine's PFAS regulations without compromising on health or environmental protections. It does not reverse the PFAS restrictions but simply ensures that FDA-approved cookware coatings are properly recognized under the law.

With the 2026 deadline approaching, manufacturers need guidance now. This bill offers a measured and practical solution that upholds public health while avoiding unintended economic harm.

I urge the committee to support LD 827.

Thank you for your time. We do have industry representatives that will be testifying that will likely be able to answer your questions.