



Henry L. Ingwersen  
Senator, District 32

**THE MAINE SENATE**  
132nd Legislature

3 State House Station  
Augusta, Maine 04333

**Testimony of Senator Henry Ingwersen in support of LD 1177, “Resolve, Establishing a 3-year Moratorium on the Installation or Reinstallation of Synthetic Turf and Requiring a Study of the Public Health and Environmental Risks of Synthetic Turf,”**  
**Before the Joint Standing Committee on Environment and Natural Resources**  
April 9, 2025

Senator Tepler, Representative Doudera, and Esteemed Members of the Environment and Natural Resources Committee, I’m State Senator Henry Ingwersen, representing the City of Biddeford and the Towns of Arundel, Dayton, Hollis, and Lyman in York County. I’m before you today to testify in support of LD 1177, “Resolve, Establishing a 3-Year Moratorium on the Installation or Reinstallation of Synthetic Turf and Requiring a Study of the Public Health and Environmental Risks of Synthetic Turf.”

As we know, artificial turf has become a popular alternative to natural grass in sports fields across the nation, and Maine is no exception. However, as more studies start to come out, there is increasing concern that artificial turf is bad for the environment and for the health of our children and communities. LD 1177 would put a three year moratorium on any new artificial turf to give the DEP time to study the health and environmental impacts and decide if further action is required to protect the health and environment of our communities.

Artificial turf is made of plastic and infused with toxic chemicals that have known health harms, especially for children. Plenty of scientific evidence confirms the presence of a large number of hazardous substances, including PFAS, phthalates, and heavy metals in artificial turf. Shredded waste tire contains at least 60 complicated compounds. PFAS and phthalates are known carcinogens. Children who play on artificial turf are more exposed to these toxins through inhalation, absorption through their skin, or even swallowing them<sup>1</sup>. While Maine’s PFAS products ban does phase out the use of PFAS in artificial turf by 2029, there are still other toxins that are just as concerning. Additionally, many artificial turf companies are claiming that their turf is PFAS-free but are only testing for a limited number of these chemicals, not doing total organic fluorine tests to make sure that they are actually PFAS-free.

In addition to the concerns about the toxins in the turf, there is also the issue of microplastics that slough off from the plastic blades of the turf and end up in our soil and water. A study done in Europe in 2023 found that runoff from artificial turf fields on top of being toxic, contributed to

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<sup>1</sup> Llompart, M., Sanchez-Prado, L., & Pablo Lamas, J. (2013, January). *Hazardous organic chemicals in rubber recycled tire playgrounds and pavers*. Chemosphere. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/22921644/>

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up to 20,000 fibers a day being found in river and sea surface waters<sup>2</sup>. For a state that depends upon our waters for our economy, we should be doing what we can to prevent further contamination of our waterways.

Maine has been a leader when it comes to protecting our communities from dangerous toxic chemicals. We should continue to do so. LD 1177 is a measured approach that will allow us to gather critical information about the impacts of turf before allowing more children to be exposed to possible harm from toxic chemicals and microplastics.

Please vote “ought to pass” on LD 1177.

Thank you for your time.

**Henry Ingwersen**  
State Senator, District 32

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<sup>2</sup> William P. de Haan, Rocío Quintana, César Vilas, Andrés Cózar, Miquel Canals, Oriol Uviedo, Anna Sanchez-Vidal, *The dark side of artificial greening: Plastic turfs as widespread pollutants of aquatic environments*, Environmental Pollution, Volume 334, 2023