



Richard Bradstreet
Senator, District 15

THE MAINE SENATE
132nd Legislature

3 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333

LD 1306, "An Act to Continue the Exemption for Polystyrene Foam Disposable Food Service Containers Prepackaged at Wholesale"

Joint Standing Committee on Environment and Natural Resources

Public Hearing

Wednesday, April 9, 2025

10:00am

Senator Tepler, Representative Doudera, and esteemed members of the Joint Standing Committee on Environment and Natural Resources:

My name is Dick Bradstreet; I am the Senator representing District 15, comprised of Augusta, Belgrade, China, Mount Vernon, Sidney, and Vassalboro.

I am happy to sponsor LD 1306 An Act to Continue the Exemption for Polystyrene Foam Disposable Food Service Containers Prepackaged at Wholesale.

I've submitted this legislation to repeal the upcoming July 1, 2025, prohibition on the using polystyrene packaging for raw protein products in the State of Maine. As of July 1, 2025, all food and beverage products sold in Maine, whether prepackaged out of State or not, cannot be packaged in polystyrene foam. While I share a commitment to environmental stewardship and reducing waste, the current law creates an undue burden on rural grocers who are already operating on razor-thin margins and facing a host of economic pressures.

Grocers, particularly those in Maine's rural and remote communities, are vital lifelines. They provide access to fresh, safe, and affordable food in areas where options are already limited. These small businesses are committed to serving their communities, many of which are food deserts that would otherwise lack access to essential products, including fresh meat, poultry, and seafood.

The upcoming ban on polystyrene for raw protein packaging presents a variety of challenges, specifically the lack of affordable and equivalent performing alternatives, supply chain constraints, and the unintended consequence of a potential protein shortage.

I respectfully urge you to reconsider the timeline and scope of this ban. A repeal of the sunset clause on the exemption would allow more time for the infrastructure to evolve, suppliers to adapt, and equitable solutions to emerge.

I hope you join me in protecting our small businesses and vote ought to pass.

While I am happy to take any questions, there are others here today who can speak more in depth to the specifics of this issue. Thank you for your time.