

Testimony of **Sarah M. Doore**

**In Support of LD 1326** An Act to Protect the Drinking Water for Consumers of Certain Water Systems by Establishing Maximum Contaminant Levels for Certain Perfluoroalkyl and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances

Before the Committee on Health and Human Services  
Maine Legislature, Augusta, ME  
April 22, 2025

Senator Ingwersen, Representative Meyer, and honorable members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services: my name is Sarah Doore, I am a resident of Benton and Waterville, Maine and I am here today to testify in favor of LD 1326. I am here today as someone who grew up in Maine — someone whose family has lived here for more than a century and who currently lives on farmland in an area surrounded by contaminated wells and land.

I spent my childhood in Bangor, drinking filtered tap water and taking pride in the fact that my city was recognized for having the "best-tasting water" for a number of years. I assumed that this meant it was also among the safest. Unfortunately, I later on learned that taste does not guarantee purity or protection from harmful contaminants. I heard the word PFAS before probably most other people my age in the U.S. but it was not until this past semester after taking a class on pollution and human health that I fully understood its scope. Having recently moved to a farm in East Benton the topic became more and more present in my mind. What were the contaminant levels in my own well water? What had my grandparents and family been drinking for six decades over in the neighboring town? I had thought that I had reduced exposure in comparison because of living off of "city" water for most of my life, then not knowing that "public" drinking water could also contain high levels of PFAS and other persistent contaminants.

Maine has always been where I envisioned building my life and raising a family. However, as I have learned more about PFAS contamination and its effects, I have become increasingly worried about what this pollution could mean for my own health, my ability to have children, and the well-being of future generations.

It's well known that PFAS contamination is alarmingly widespread throughout Maine. In Waterville, where I currently attend school at Colby College, the public water supply is contaminated, drawing from China Lake, which is itself polluted. Although contamination levels here are relatively low — PFAS are known to be dangerous even at extraordinarily small concentrations. They are classified as human carcinogens, and their presence in our drinking water is a serious public health threat that cannot be understated. From a health standpoint, I am especially concerned about the endocrine-disrupting properties of PFAS. These chemicals mimic fatty acids and interfere with the normal functioning of hormones, contributing to altered cholesterol levels, thyroid dysfunction, and serious reproductive issues. Research has shown that PFAS exposure can disrupt fertility, impair fetal development, and increase the risk of adverse pregnancy outcomes. They can accumulate in thyroid cells, disrupting hormone production and potentially leading to hypothyroidism. Babies are now being born already burdened by PFAS in their bodies — a clear indication of how contamination transfers from one generation to the next.

The risk of birth defects, developmental issues, and other adverse pregnancy outcomes caused by PFAS exposure is not an abstract or future problem — it is a very real and immediate threat to Maine families, including my own, and to the countless others who call this state home.

Stronger regulations and stricter drinking water standards are urgently needed. We must act now to protect not only our loved ones but also the generations of Mainers yet to come. I urge you to vote **ought to pass** LD 1326. Thank you.