



Maine Conservation Voters

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Testimony in opposition to LD297, An Act Regarding the Management of Oversized Bulky Waste from Wastewater Treatment Plants

April 28, 2025

Senator Tepler, Representative Doudera and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Environment and Natural Resources, my name is Cathy Breen. I am the Director of Government Affairs at Maine Conservation Voters (MCV), a statewide non-profit organization with 13,000 members and supporters that is building a just, thriving future for all by acting on the climate crisis, protecting the environment, and safeguarding our democracy. I'm speaking today in opposition to **LD297, An Act Regarding the Management of Oversized Bulky Waste from Wastewater Treatment Plants**.

MCV's concerns about this bill fall into three categories:

1. It negates recent legislation to phase out out-of-state waste in Maine's state-owned landfill, Juniper Ridge Landfill (JRL);
2. It is not consistent with Maine's Solid Waste Hierarchy;
3. It will exacerbate and perpetuate environmental injustice.

1) LD297 Negates Recent Legislation to Phase Out Out-of-State Waste

LD1639, enacted by the 130th Maine Legislature and signed by Governor Mills, ensured that, by July 1, 2025, the solid waste that enters Juniper Ridge would only be waste originally discarded in Maine, rather than outside of Maine. LD297 proposes to move that date out three years to 2028, which means that Maine will landfill up to 25,000 additional tons per year of waste generated beyond Maine borders, by states that choose not to landfill this material. The bill also includes some alarming legislative gymnastics that re-define waste coming from outside of Maine's as "in-state" waste simply by how it's used at Juniper Ridge.

2) LD297 is Not Consistent with Maine's Solid Waste Hierarchy

According to Maine Statute Title 38, Chapter 23, Subsection 2101, "It is the policy of the State to plan for and implement an integrated approach to solid waste management for solid waste generated in this State *and solid waste imported into this State*, which must be based on the following order of priority..." 1) Reduce 2) Reuse 3) Recycle 4) Compost 5) Process (e.g. incinerate) 6) Landfill. Accepting "oversized bulky waste" - most of which is construction

demolition debris, including appliances and furniture, that is laden with toxins - and landfilling it conflicts with this guiding paradigm.

3) LD297 will Exacerbate and Perpetuate Environmental Injustice

This bill will expand the disproportionate impact of runoff into the Penobscot River on the people and natural resources of the Penobscot Nation by expanding the landfill by 61 acres. In the words of Penobscot Tribal Chief Kirk Francis, "We consider the Penobscot River to be the oldest citizen of our tribe. It does more than carry water – it carries life, culture, and the history for our people....The continued contamination from this landfill endangers that legacy and puts the health of our community at risk. We are firmly opposing this harmful expansion to protect our water, environment, and history for future generations of the Penobscot Nation."¹

For these reasons, MCV urges the committee to vote "Ought Not to Pass." Thank you for your consideration.

¹ <https://www.clf.org/newsroom/clf-maine-residents-appeal-decision-on-harmful-landfill-expansion/>