

Testimony of Ashley Luszczki
In Support of L.D. 297, An Act Regarding the Management of Oversized Bulky Waste from
Wastewater Treatment Plants
Before the Environment and Natural Resource Committee
April 28, 2025

Senator Tepler, Representative Doudera and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Environment and Natural Resource, my name is Ashley Luszczki. I am here on behalf of the Maine State Chamber of Commerce, representing a network of 5,000+ small to large businesses. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of L.D. 297, An Act Regarding the Management of Oversized Bulky Waste from Wastewater Treatment Plants

We believe this legislation is a practical, time-limited solution to a growing challenge within Maine's solid waste management system. It responsibly extends the timeline – through 2028 – for Juniper Ridge Landfill (JRL) to continue accepting oversized bulky waste (OBW) used as daily cover and to blend with sludge, helping to maintain operational integrity and public health safeguards at the facility. The policy shift in LD 1911 (2022) that ended the land-spreading of biosolids was an essential step to protect our environment and public health. However, the result has been a rapid and significant increase in biosolids being sent to JRL. Compounding the challenge, LD 1639 (2022) restricted the flow of oversized bulky waste to JRL, inadvertently reducing the material needed to properly stabilize and manage the increasing volume of sludge.

This is not just a landfill management issue – it's a public infrastructure issue with direct implications for Maine businesses, municipalities, and taxpayers. Wastewater treatment facilities, including those serving business parks, manufacturing centers, and growing municipalities, are already operating under tight budgets and increasing regulatory pressures. Without access to a reliable and environmentally responsible disposal solution for biosolids, the entire wastewater system could face increased costs, capacity issues, and operational disruptions. We believe L.D. 297, which provides a bit more time that this waste can be collected, allows the state and businesses more time to develop solutions – including adopting new technologies to deal with waste.

We appreciate your consideration and urge you to support L.D. 297 - a common-sense measure that protects public services, supports business continuity, and helps prevent a crisis in our waste management system.