



Testimony in Support of LD 297
An Act Regarding the Management of Oversized Bulky Waste from Wastewater Treatment Plants
April 28, 2025

Senator Tepler, Representative Doudera, and members of the committee, my name is Greg Leahey and I am here on behalf of ReSource Waste Services in support of LD 297.

First, I would like to thank Representatives Bridgeo and Soboleski for bringing this bill forward, and to the Department of Environmental Protection for their continued dialogue when it comes to identifying practical solutions regarding the disposal of sludge from wastewater treatment plants.

For those who are not familiar, our facility in Lewiston processes construction and demolition debris and sends recyclable and merchantable materials (metals, plastics, etc...) to various markets. Without this processing, many thousands of tons of otherwise recyclable materials would unnecessarily end up in landfills. We have worked for the last several years with the Legislature and the DEP to improve our processes to increase the amount of recycling that we do while at the same time significantly reducing the volume of waste generated in other states that comes to our facility. This work has required significant capital investment on our part (in the millions of dollars), but we are proud to have achieved our results and continue to work on meeting and exceeding future statutory goals.

The 131st Maine Legislature passed LD 718 in 2023 in response to an urgent need to increase the amount of bulking material necessary to manage a significant increase of the volume of sludge that was required to be disposed of at Juniper Ridge Landfill. Without adequate bulking material, sludge in a landfill poses significant environmental, safety, and public health concerns. LD 718 provided a temporary allowance for the disposal or placement of oversized bulky waste in an effort to facilitate the volume of bulking material necessary to manage sludge. That temporary allowance will expire on July 1 of this year, unless the Legislature acts to extend the allowance, as LD 297 proposes to do.

LD 297 also makes an important necessary clarification to the language passed in LD 718, which is to classify excess residue associated with the processing of oversized bulky waste that eventually gets used as alternative daily cover at the landfill as a waste generated within the State. In the haste of drafting and passing LD 718, there seems to have been some inadvertent misinterpretation about how this material would be treated from a regulatory perspective. The truth is, in order to produce an adequate volume of oversized bulky waste to use as bulking material there is naturally a volume of non-OBW residue that must be disposed of. That excess residue can be beneficially used as alternative daily cover in the landfill, but in order to be compliant it should be classified as waste generated within the State. Without this clarification,



ReSource Lewiston simply cannot produce the volume of oversized bulky waste needed for sludge disposal and remain in compliance with other statutory and regulatory requirements. This is consistent with testimony that we provided to this committee in 2023 when we stated: *"However, if ReSource Waste Lewiston is asked to facilitate an increased volume of bulking material to the State landfill, it is critical that we are transparent that it cannot also simultaneously comply with the existing statutory recycling targets."*

For these reasons, we recommend that you support this legislation. LD 297 provides a reasonable and measured solution to accommodate current sludge disposal conditions and allows the Legislature and DEP to continue to monitor the situation, while at the same time providing reasonable compliance accommodations for our facility and others.

Thank you for your consideration, and I would be pleased to answer any questions or provide more information at the work session upon your request.