



CITY OF BANGOR

Committee on Environmental and Natural Resources

Testimony in Opposition to LD 1604– “An Act to Protect Groundwater and Surface Waters from Perfluoroalkyl and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances from Landfill Leachate”

April 25, 2025

Senator Tepler, Representative Doudera, and distinguished members of the Environment and Natural Resources Committee. My name is Amanda Smith, Director of Water Quality Management for the City of Bangor, and I’m providing testimony in opposition to LD1604 “An Act to Protect Groundwater and Surface Waters from Perfluoroalkyl and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances from Landfill Leachate.”

The City of Bangor protects the Penobscot and Kenduskeag rivers by providing wastewater treatment for 3-billion gallons of sewage, annually. Three Maine communities rely on Bangor’s wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) to protect human health and safeguard the environment.

LD1604 seeks to address the issue of PFAS in landfill leachate. While Bangor is supportive of efforts to address all sources of PFAS, this bill is highly concerning to the City for the following reasons:

While the City does accept and treat leachate from an inactive landfill, Bangor has performed an intensive study to identify sources of PFAS. Findings from the study demonstrate that PFAS compounds are being introduced into the sewer system from all sources; however, leachate is not the most significant source of PFAS in the WWTP effluent. LD1604 would not alleviate the highest levels of PFAS which enter the sewer system from the former DOW Air Force Base. We believe that PFAS contamination must be controlled at the source but LD1604 would impose effluent limits in a timeframe that would not allow for source reduction, reduction monitoring, as well as a planning and implementation period. Furthermore, LD1604 does not take into consideration the lack of available technology to treat PFAS in high volumes of water, such as the Bangor WWTP effluent.

LD1604 appears to circumvent established regulatory processes which take a holistic approach with considerations far beyond what this bill reflects. The PFAS regulatory process is scientific, complex, and incomplete; however, the Environmental Protection Agency has established Aquatic Life Ambient Water Quality Standards and has issued draft Human Health Ambient Water Quality Standards. Once finalized, the Maine Department of Environmental Protection can act to adopt these standards to impose effluent limits where necessary. This success of this regulatory process has been proven over many decades and has protected the environment from copious concerning pollutants. The City encourages the Committee to give thoughtful consideration to the necessity of enacting this legislation ahead of the regulatory process.

We urge the Committee vote “ought not to pass” on LD1604.

Thank you for your consideration. Please feel free to reach out with questions.

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