



To: Committee on Environment & Natural Resources
From: Jackson Chadwick, Maine Youth for Climate Justice
Date: Monday, May 5, 2025

RE: Testimony in Support of L.D. 1870: "An Act to Establish a Climate Superfund Cost Recovery Program to Impose Penalties on Climate Polluters"

Good morning Senator Tepler, Representative Doudera, and members of the Committee on Environment & Natural Resources,

My name is Jackson Chadwick, and I am the Advocacy Director for Maine Youth for Climate Justice (MYCJ). I am very excited to be with you today, representing one of the leading organizations supporting L.D. 1870: An Act to Establish a Climate Superfund Cost Recovery Program to Impose Penalties on Climate Polluters.

I grew up in Camden, in midcoast Maine, where the mountains meet the sea. I've witnessed the impacts of climate change on my hometown's community and economy. During the late 2023 and early 2024 winter storms, Camden experienced damage to our working waterfront and coastal structures¹. In recent years, our beloved Camden Snow Bowl—a town-owned ski area—has faced challenges due to drier, rainier, and warmer winters, forcing it to close on certain days or end its season early. This concerns me as a young person because my generation will be left to address this problem—a problem we did not cause.

These are two examples of a changing climate, not just at our doorstep, but also coming through it. And this isn't limited to coastal communities—it's happened in our riverfront towns and mountainous areas. The storms of 2023 and 2024 caused over \$90 million in damage to public infrastructure² and significantly more in private property damage. This won't be the last time we face catastrophic weather and storm damage.

So why are we here? The answer is to finally implement a long-term solution for storm preparedness and climate adaptation projects. The Climate Superfund does exactly that. The bill before you will save our taxpayers, municipalities, and state government money in the long run. Instead of needing to pass a bill like L.D. 1 every legislative session, we can establish a Climate Superfund to better prepare for and respond to storms.

¹ "Maine Coast Walloped by Flooding Amid Rainfall, Astronomical Tides." *Maine Public*. January 13, 2024.

<https://www.mainepublic.org/environment-and-outdoors/2024-01-13/maine-coast-walloped-by-flooding-amid-rainfall-astronomical-tides>

² "Commission Urges Maine to Prepare for Next Round of Severe Winter Storms." *The Portland Press Herald*. November 12, 2024.

<https://www.pressherald.com/2024/11/12/commission-urges-maine-to-prepare-for-next-round-of-severe-winter-storms/>

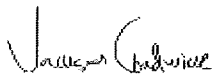
This legislation also requires that 35% of funds be allocated to low-income, rural, and communities of color. Research shows that such communities are disproportionately impacted by natural disasters such as flooding³ and lack the funding and resources for recovery or adaptation.

This includes some of Maine's most rural counties: Franklin, Oxford, Piscataquis, and Somerset. Each of these counties experienced intense flooding during the winter storms of 2023/2024 and is at least 78% more flood-prone than other counties in the United States (see page 3).

We can't afford to cover climate damages by ourselves, and we shouldn't bear that responsibility. Therefore, let's be proactive, protect Mainers, and hold polluters accountable for their actions by voting to pass L.D. 1870.

Thank you for your time and consideration of our testimony.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jackson Chadwick".

Jackson Chadwick
Advocacy Director
Maine Youth for Climate Justice

³ "The Unequal Impacts of Flooding." *Headwaters Economics*. October 2, 2023.
<https://headwaterseconomics.org/natural-hazards/unequal-impacts-of-flooding/>