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*Testimony of Rep. Lori K. Gramlich presenting*

## **LD 1928, An Act to Prohibit Lodging Establishments from Providing Single-use Plastic Containers**

*Before the Joint Standing Committee on Environment and Natural Resources*

Senator Tepler and distinguished colleagues of the Environment and Natural Resources Committee, I am Lori Gramlich. I have the honor and privilege of representing House District 131, the lovely seaside community of Old Orchard Beach, and of serving as Assistant House Majority Leader, and as temporary co-chair of this amazing committee. I am here to present ***LD 1928, An Act to Prohibit Lodging Establishments from Providing Single-use Plastic Containers***.

As many of you know, I have spent a significant amount of time in this committee, working on the ways in which we can decrease our dependence on plastics.

This bill, LD 1928, represents a critical and timely step forward in Maine's efforts to reduce plastic waste, protect our environment and encourage sustainable practices across the hospitality industry.

As I am sure that we have all seen when traveling, single-use plastic containers for personal health and beauty products—such as mini shampoo and conditioner bottles, lotion bottles and wrapped soap bars—are commonly found in hotels, motels and other lodging establishments. While convenient, these items contribute significantly to plastic pollution. They are often used once or twice before being discarded, ending up in landfills, incinerators, or worse—our natural landscapes and oceans.

According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the plastics industry produces hundreds of millions of tons of waste each year, and single-use plastics make up a large portion of that waste. This problem is particularly acute in tourism-heavy states like Maine, where the influx of visitors increases the volume of waste during peak seasons.

### **Environmental and Economic Benefits**

This bill provides a practical and phased approach to eliminate a major source of plastic waste without placing undue burden on lodging operators. By setting implementation dates based on

establishment size—2030 for larger businesses and 2032 for smaller ones—the bill allows for an orderly transition that respects operational constraints while still achieving the long-term goal of sustainability.

Moreover, the bill does ***not*** ban the use of hygiene products altogether—it simply encourages a shift toward more sustainable packaging solutions, such as refillable dispensers or compostable containers. Many national hotel chains are already adopting these alternatives, finding them both environmentally responsible and cost-effective over time.

### **Leadership and Precedent**

As you know, we in Maine have consistently led the nation in environmental policy, from banning plastic bags to restricting polystyrene foam containers. Passing this bill will continue that leadership and align the state with similar measures already enacted in Illinois, Washington State, California and New York City, with other states such as Hawaii exploiting similar initiatives. These jurisdictions have seen positive environmental impacts and broad public support for such efforts. Additionally, many large hotel chains such as Marriott and Hyatt have already transitioned from small toiletry bottles to larger pump-topped bottles of shampoo, conditioner and body gels.

### **Addressing Concerns**

You may hear opponents argue that guests prefer individual-sized toiletries for hygiene reasons or that this would be burdensome due to cost. There will be folks here today to speak to some of the cost analysis, and in fact, many studies and consumer surveys have shown increasing acceptance—and even preference—for bulk dispensers. Bulk dispensers can meet public health needs while dramatically reducing waste.

Additionally, this bill includes thoughtful exemptions for small stand-alone cabins and low-capacity properties, recognizing the unique logistics these locations face.

### **Conclusion**

This legislation is not just about eliminating small plastic bottles—it's about embracing a future where businesses contribute positively to the environment and operate with sustainability in mind. By supporting this bill, Maine can take a meaningful step toward reducing plastic pollution, protecting Maine's pristine natural beauty and setting a responsible example for other states to follow.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I urge the Committee to vote in favor of this bill. I would be happy to try to answer any questions for you.