

Testimony on LD 1982
Elijah Winslow – New Gloucester, Maine

Good morning, members of the committee,

My name is Elijah Winslow, and I'm from New Gloucester, Maine. I've spent the past few summers working for our family business, Winslow Agriculture LLC, and I'm familiar with the real-world impact PFAS contamination has had—particularly in Fairfield, where the source was traced back to the Waterville Sewer Treatment District.

Our business was among the first to conduct PFAS testing. We identified over 500 acres of contaminated farmland, and as a result, those fields were no longer used.

I'm here this morning to make one clear and urgent point: **the Legislature made a mistake in adopting the current definition of PFAS.**

Over the last 3 years i have taken 8 chemistry courses as part of my pre-medical studies. While I don't claim to be an expert, I've gained a powerful understanding of basic chemistry. And it doesn't take an expert to see that the current definition is scientifically flawed.

Under Maine's existing law, virtually **any compound with a single carbon-fluorine bond** not only qualifies as a PFAS, but will be subject to extreme regulation. This is not how PFAS is defined at the federal level, nor is it how the scientific community typically identifies these compounds. The result? Life-saving medications, common agricultural tools, and safe industrial products are now being swept into regulatory confusion.

PFAS is a broad term that refers to any molecule with a fluorinated carbon atom. These products contain fluorinated carbons in order to make them more stable. (The dangerous products usually contain long carbon chains that are saturated with fluorine. These large compounds do represent a clear environmental risk. But instead of targeting known dangerous structural sequences, our current regulation would broadly ban any product with a fluorinated carbon.

However many of these products do not represent risks to the environment. In fact there are likely people in this building that ingested medication today that contained a fluorinated carbon atom. Many anti depressants, heart medications, and antibiotics contain these molecular structures.

If we are willing to put these products into our own bodies. Why would we ban their industrial use.