



Testimony in Support of LD 2115, An Act to Protect Private Wells from Hazardous Substances

To the Committee of Environment and Natural Resources

by Kate Phillips, Advocacy Associate

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Senator Tepler, Representative Doudera, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Environment and Natural Resources, my name is Kate Phillips, and I serve as the Advocacy Associate for the Natural Resources Council of Maine (NRCM). I am pleased to testify in support of LD 2115.

This bill would change the name of the existing Land Application Contaminant Monitoring Fund to the Well Contamination Response Fund, which would be used to support owners of drinking water wells contaminated by hazardous substances, including PFAS. In Maine, more than 50% of residents use private wells, which is one of the highest percentages in the country. As such, helping ensure that Maine's groundwater is protected from hazardous substances is critical for the safety of more than half of the state's residents.

As members of this committee know, PFAS chemicals can be the source of health effects including increased risk of some cancers, developmental effects in children, and decreased fertility.¹ We appreciate the leadership that this committee has provided across a broad range of bills aimed at dealing with PFAS.

The Department of Environmental Protection has been investigating the presence of PFAS in Maine's soil and groundwater for a few years. A 2025 update reported that 20% of the approximately 2,920 groundwater samples taken by the Department have PFAS levels above Maine's drinking water standard.² This bill can help address PFAS contamination in such wells and serve as a fund to address other hazardous pollutants that may threaten drinking water wells.

All residents impacted by contaminated wells should have access to remediation solutions and clean drinking water. Maine already funds the Maine State Housing Authority's Well Water Abatement Program, which provides grants to single-family homeowners and small landlords with highly contaminated wells. However, recipients of these funds must have income at or below 120% of the area's median income.³ Routine testing, filter system installation, and filter changeouts cost thousands of

¹ *Our current understanding of the human health and environmental risks of PFAS* | US EPA. (2025, November 5). US EPA. <https://www.epa.gov/pfas/our-current-understanding-human-health-and-environmental-risks-pfas>

² Maine Department of Environmental Protection, & Miller, S. (2025). Status of Maine's PFAS soil and groundwater investigation at sludge and septic land application sites. In *Second Biennial Report for the Committee on the Environment and Natural Resources*. Maine Department of Environmental Protection.

<https://www.maine.gov/ifw/docs/PFAS%20Soil%20and%20Groundwater%20Investigation%20Report%202025%20FINAL.pdf>

³ *Well Water abatement program*. (n.d.). <https://www.mainehousing.org/programs-services/HomeImprovement/homeimprovementdetail/well-water-abatement-program>

dollars.⁴ There is an undefined subset of Mainers who do not qualify for the abatement program, but cannot afford the high costs of testing, remediation, and accessing a new source of clean water.

Protecting access to clean drinking water is a high priority for Maine. We support this bill to help advance that goal, and we encourage you to vote “ought to pass” on LD 2115.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify on this bill.

⁴ Maine Department of Environmental Protection, & Miller, S. (2025b). Status of Maine’s PFAS Soil and Groundwater Investigation at Sludge and Septage Land Application Sites. In *Second Biennial Report for the Committee on the Environment and Natural Resources*. Maine Department of Environmental Protection.

<https://www.maine.gov/ifw/docs/PFAS%20Soil%20and%20Groundwater%20Investigation%20Report%202025%20FINAL.pdf>