

Good afternoon members of the Committee. My name is Jessica Nadeau and I am testifying on my own time. I am here to highlight how LD2212, as proposed, falls short to provide necessary funding to address many unmet needs within the state government workforce.

Since August 2022, I have served as an Environmental Specialist III in the Sustainability Unit within the Bureau of Remediation and Waste Management at the Department of Environmental Protection.

In my current role, I am assigned to implement the Stewardship Program for Packaging, a waste reduction initiative intended to help address Maine's limited waste disposal capacity. Prior to joining State service, I worked for nearly eight years as a public-school chemistry teacher.

For much of my time in this role, I have conducted formal rulemaking under the Maine Administrative Procedure Act, along with additional informal rulemaking and regulatory development, which I co-lead with another Environmental Specialist III. This role also includes participation in proceedings before the Board of Environmental Protection, as well as significant regulatory coordination and public engagement across multiple industries.

These responsibilities reflect a high level of regulatory and programmatic accountability.

The classification and compensation structure has not kept pace with the scope and complexity of the responsibilities assigned. This misalignment contributes to pay compression and creates long-term retention risk within the Department.

As the State continues to advance comprehensive environmental initiatives, alignment between responsibility and compensation is essential for retaining experienced staff and ensuring continuity in regulatory implementation.

I respectfully urge the Committee to make meaningful progress toward closing the state employee pay gap and ensuring that compensation accurately reflects the work being performed.

I appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony today.

Jessica Nadeau