

2/25/21

To: Agriculture and Forestry Committee

From: Anna Siegel

Re: Testimony in Support of LD 437, An Act to Establish the Maine Healthy Soils Program

I am writing as a Portland student and climate activist to urge you to vote “ought to pass” on LD 437.

Establishing this voluntary program would equip farmers with the tools, resources, and support they may need to enhance the soil health on their lands. The number of people living and managing working farms who are interested in employing strategies to create more nutrient-rich and hardy soils is higher than ever, as acknowledged by the [National Farmers Union](#). LD 437 will work to meet this interest in Maine with a centralized and accessible information hub. To utilize existing knowledge and keep pace with heightened understanding about healthy soil practices, LD 437 will connect individuals for farmer-to-farmer education.

This bill excites me in particular because it would directly support Maine’s climate goals of carbon emission reductions and building resilience to climate-induced disasters. Healthy soils sequester more carbon and other gases and require less fertilizer, reducing costs for the farmer and chemicals in the environment. Carbon sequestration is a vital strategy that must be employed in tandem with electrification to combat the drastic carbon levels in the atmosphere. Healthy soils also produce crops and fields that are more resistant to flooding, drought, and heatwaves, leading to higher yields and a natural buffer against natural disasters for infrastructure on farmland.

To tackle the climate crisis, we as a state and nation must come at it from every angle, and that includes looking at the ground beneath our feet. This is why I support LD 437, and I sincerely hope you do as well.

Respectfully submitted,
Anna Siegel

Anna Siegel
Yarmouth

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