

Noami Brautigam
Monroe
LD 2013

Senator Dill, Representative O'Neil and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, my name is Noami Brautigam and I live in Monroe where I own and operate Dickey Hill Farm with my partner, James Gagne. I am here to testify in support of LD 2013.

First off I want to thank my farming peers who are struggling with PFAS contamination for not only sharing their experience, but sharing it again and again. It is a lot to ask of them and I hope that we all listen carefully and act accordingly to honor the vulnerability they are bringing to the table.

I am heartbroken, angry and scared as I watch our friends and farming peers reeling from devastating news that their family, farm and the place they call home are contaminated with PFAS due to state supported spreading of bio-solids decades prior. I am also anxiously aware this is the tip of the iceberg and that tragically more of my peers will likely be in their shoes soon as they discover PFAS contamination.

The State of Maine issued hundreds of licenses to spread PFAS contaminated sludge on farmland across the state and now the state needs to take accountability for this by doing absolutely everything they can to support impacted farmers. Without a meaningful support in the form of a robust safety net, we are failing the farmers who are inheriting this nightmare.

Not only are we failing individual farmers but we are also risking so much of our vibrant agricultural community that is foundational to growing our regional food security. Each of these contaminated farms are operated by brilliant farmers who have spent years developing their own unique farming wisdom. It is the state's responsibility and ought to be their priority to keep farming as a possible livelihood for them if they so choose.

Lastly, I want to note that it is not only farmers' who are struggling with PFAS contamination. Tribal communities, farm workers and other rural residence with contaminated wells will also need meaningful support.

Thank you to those who created LD 2013 and to the committee, please support this very important bill.