



Northern Tilth

State of Maine Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry Committee

March 14, 2022

Subject: Testimony in Support of LD 2013

Dear Committee Chair and Representatives:

My name is Andrew Carpenter. I am the principal of a Maine-based agricultural services company called Northern Tilth, LLC and I am writing to you to urge your support for LD 2013, *An Act Relating to PFAS Contamination in the State*. As a company, we have worked with over 300 farms in Maine providing nutrient management planning services, crop consulting services, soil fertility testing, compost planning and more recently PFAS testing and consultation. I believe that to date we have provided the most testing for PFAS on farms in Maine outside of the DEP, the DACF and the CDC. In addition to our own work directly with farms, we communicate regularly with the DEP, DACF and CDC related to their PFAS-related findings in Maine agriculture and we have been collaborating with several groups on making recommendations for farms when PFAS contamination is identified.

In our capacity in providing PFAS testing services to farms, we have had to be the bearer of bad news to several of the farms that you have likely read about in the news that have found extraordinarily high levels of PFAS in their water, soil and farm products. The news in some cases is particularly devastating; not only are the farmers themselves at risk from the health implications of PFAS in their own water and food (and ultimately within their own bodies) but their income-generating potential as farmers can be shut off overnight. As all the Committee representatives know, farming is already a low margin, high-risk business into which farmers pour every aspect of their lives. The added burden of finding PFAS contamination is in some cases not bearable for Maine farmers.

I strongly believe that every aspect of this act is necessary and appropriate for moving forward to address the PFAS findings to date and additional areas of contamination that we are likely to find in the future. The act addresses the health of individuals impacted by high levels of contamination, relocating farmers when PFAS contamination is high enough that commercial agriculture is no longer feasible on a particular farm, and helping to find solutions to agricultural PFAS contamination through research and development on both remediation and changing land management strategies. All of the agencies, farmers and supporting companies working on this issue at this time, including our own company, are strapped for time and resources in helping to address the issue.

In closing, I urge your support for this bill and am available for follow up communications with the Committee if there are particular questions related to the issue of PFAS in Maine agricultural that you think I could be helpful in addressing.

Sincerely,

Andrew Carpenter