

Senator Chip Curry
3 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333-0003
(207) 287-1515
Chip.Curry@legislature.maine.gov

**Testimony by State Senator Chip Curry
In Support of LD 2013, “An Act Relating to Perfluoroalkyl and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances
Contamination in the State”**

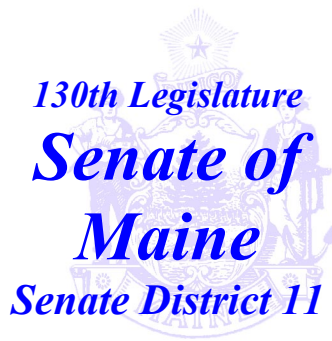
Tuesday, March 15, 2022

Senator Dill, Representative O’Neil and honorable colleagues of the Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry Committee, I am Senator Chip Curry and I represent Senate District 11, which includes the rural, coastal and island communities of Waldo County. I’m here today to speak in support of LD 2013, “An Act Relating to Perfluoroalkyl and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances Contamination in the State.”

The presence and persistence of PFAS in soils, groundwater and unfortunately crops are just beginning to unfold as a national issue and the emerging information in Maine is incredibly concerning. As we learn more about the impacts of PFAS on our environment, agriculture and human health the need to act becomes increasingly imperative. As the Department of Environmental Protection undergoes their PFAS investigation, more and more sites are being identified showcasing how incredibly widespread the problem truly is. Currently, there are approximately 700 sites across 34 towns that have been identified for higher risk of contamination. This is just the beginning, and we must invest in this now.

There are farmers in Waldo County and across Maine who have been shut down because of PFAS contamination. These are farmers who have put everything they have into their farms for years, sometimes generations. Farms that might have been spread with municipal and industrial sludge thirty years ago are testing extremely high today. Without timely testing and research on alternative crops, these farmers are stuck waiting on the science and our testing capacity to catch up to their need. In addition to the financial costs, these farmers are also facing uncertain health outcomes. Some of our farmers have had their blood tested and have learned their PFAS concentrations are equal to (or far greater than) the concentrations found in the chemical workers that produce the PFAS.

We know this is a problem that needs to be addressed right now. No one should be afraid of testing their land and water because the results could devastate their livelihood. We need to invest resources to help Maine farmers; these are hard working families who deserve support from the State. Funding from LD 2013 will help farmers now by helping to remediate their land, continue education and research, help to monitor their health, buy contaminated agricultural land and centralize data and information.



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I am appreciative of thoroughness that current Departments of Environmental Protection and Agriculture Conservation and Forestry have taken upon the discovery of PFAS contamination in our state. They have moved quickly and acted with transparency to keep farmers, legislators and the public informed and we cannot let up. Maine is doing first-in-the-nation investigations and remediations with PFAS and we must continue to lead the way. Funding like this to address PFAS contamination on agricultural land reaffirms our commitment to helping Maine people and Maine farms.

Thank you for your time.