



Testimony in support of LD 2013, An Act Relating to Perfluoroalkyl and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances Contamination in the State

March 15, 2022

To Senator Dill, Representative O'Neil and the members of the Joint Standing Committee On Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry,

My name is Kristen Miale and I am the President of Good Shepherd Food Bank of Maine. We have a network of more than 500 partner agencies, supporting our mission to eliminate hunger in Maine by improving access to nutritious food for people in need, building strong community partnerships, and mobilizing the public in the fight to end hunger.

Good Shepherd Food Bank, like so many others, recognize the importance of the agricultural sector in the economic future of Maine. Both the livelihood for the farmers and the multiplier effect of a thriving farming community has significant positive ripple effects on the state's economy in general. This is why we have made major investments in supporting the local agricultural community over the past decade through the Mainers Feeding Mainers program. We are making another significant investment in food processing in our new venture, Harvesting Good.

All of this relies on a thriving agricultural sector with the foundation of Maine retaining its reputation as a high-quality food producing state. If Maine's agriculture sector were to be compromised, the impact to rural economies would be crushing, and would result in significantly more people experiencing poverty and hunger.

We also are inspired and motivated by the promise of a New England Food Vision, which is going to rely on Maine being a major food-exporting state to the greater northeast. This vision will allow us to strengthen local and regional food systems so we are less dependent on international food, which as we all have seen with recent events can be quickly and easily disrupted. This vision would also strengthen rural communities and economies throughout the region.

This is not something that charity, philanthropy, nonprofits like Good Shepherd Food Bank should solve. We can and we will support our farm partners in the short-term, but the food system that is suffering needs meaningful state- and eventually federal- intervention to make these farms and families whole.

We support LD 2013, and urge you to support it as well.

Thank you for your consideration.
Sincerely,

Kristen Miale
President, Good Shepherd Food Bank of Maine

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