

Avery Yale Kamila
Portland Protectors
LD 2013

Dear Honorable Committee Members,

I am writing to urge you to adopt LD 2013, LD 2019 and LD 2021. Maine is currently facing an environmental, health and business crisis that was 100% avoidable if the state regulators had listened to members of Maine's organic community instead of members of the waste disposal community. Rather than following the precautionary principle, state regulators decided to "wait and see" what happens. Such an approach to high risk situations is imprudent and today's crisis is the result. For decades, organic advocates have been warning about the risks of sewage sludge as the Maine DEP continued to tell farmers the sludge was "safe" and would never harm their soil or water. Once again, Maine's organic community has been proved right, and rather than rejoicing we all get to watch as this slow-motion nightmare unfolds across Maine's best farmland and contaminates our water and food supply.

I hope you and your colleagues will see this for the wake up call that it is and adopt the scientific approach to risk known as the precautionary principle and ban the use of all land applications of raw sludge and composted sludge.

At the same time, the state continues to take a high risk approach to its related regulation of pesticides. In Portland, we've been attracting more residents and new visitors than ever, many of whom come because of our healthy lifestyle. Our strict organic land care ordinance, which bans most cosmetic lawn pesticides, is seen as a major part of Portland's healthy lifestyle.

Portland was forced to adopt a pesticide ordinance stronger than the state's because the state of Maine has failed to take a precautionary approach to high-risk pesticides that are used for totally cosmetic purposes. LD 2019 and LD 2021 give the legislature an opportunity to start bringing its pesticide regulations in line with the most basic of public health protections. Without such statewide regulations, more and more Maine municipalities will be forced to pass their own pesticide regulations, which only makes compliance more difficult for the businesses that buy and sell pesticides. In Portland, we collect annual applicator reports from businesses that work in the city, and the vast majority of them are delivered electronically.

Please do the right thing and endorse LD 2013, LD 2019 and LD 2021. Thank you for considering my comments.

Sincerely,
Avery

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Avery Yale Kamila, AOLCP
Co-founder
Portland Protectors
PO Box 4242
Portland, ME 04101
207-780-0915
www.facebook.com/portlandprotectors