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LD 579

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony from home.

I enthusiastically support LD579 because it is a crucial step toward food security for Mainers. We - and all Americans - depend heavily upon vast expanses of farmland that is now facing extreme drought, flooding and loss of topsoil. Having lived in CA where even our local family-run CSA farm faced fire on their hillside and fields entirely underwater in the span of two short years, the crisis is very real to me. And that is to say nothing of the central valley where hundreds of thousands of acres ended up under water as Lake Tulare re-filled under the rains of an "atmospheric river". We are fortunate to have rich farmland in Maine and have the capacity to feed ourselves sustainably for generations if we make the right decisions today. Small scale agriculture and family farms are an essential part of food security and we must make their preservation a priority.

As I'm sure will be mentioned today, Maine currently lags far behind other states with less than 5% of farmland protected. I am so grateful that steps are being taken to protect more farmland in Maine and ensure a sustainable local food supply that we can rely upon.

Thank you.