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Belfast
LD 2091

Good morning Senator Ingwersen, Representative Pluecker, and members of the Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry Committee:

I am writing in support of LD 2091, a bill that would allow Maine companies to safely use reusable packaging in their operations.

As a resident of Belfast, several years ago I was involved in supporting the ordinance to ban single-use plastic bags -- one of the first cities in the state to do so. Businesses made the transition away from single-use bags and our community is better for it.

Now, there is an opportunity statewide to reduce single-use and non-recycled packaging. Perhaps coincidentally, Belfast organizers are now planning a campaign to further reduce plastic pollution by cutting back on the amount of plastic cutlery, straws, cups and lids passed out by some businesses.

It's not just a local problem; it's worldwide. The focus for this year's Earth Day in April is plastic pollution. We are drowning in it. Claims that plastic is widely recycled are nonsense; data shows that only about 9 percent of plastic is actually recycled. Microplastics are found in every niche, from the depths of the sea to the highest peaks, not to mention in our bodies.

Now Maine has a chance to again be a leader by allowing businesses to use reusable packaging. We can cut down on the amount of plastic in our landfills and incinerators. We can stop its infiltration into our air and water. State laws should encourage more reusable containers, not discourage it.

Please pass LD 2091. At this crucial juncture for the environment, it's the right thing to do.