

Testimony on LD 226: An Act To Limit the Use of Hydrofluorocarbons To Fight Climate Change

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Honorable Committee Chairs Senator Brenner & Representative Tucker and Members of the Environment and Natural Resources Committee.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on *LD 226 – An Act To Limit the Use of Hydrofluorocarbons To Fight Climate Change*, and appreciation to Rep. Tucker for sponsoring this important legislation.

Acadia Center is a non-profit, research and advocacy organization incorporated in Maine and committed to advancing the clean energy future by offering real-world solutions to the climate crisis. Acadia Center tackles complex problems, identifies clear recommendations for reforms, and advocates to create significant change that supports a low-carbon economy across the Northeast which can then be a model for application elsewhere. Acadia Center identifies regional, state, and local improvements that will dramatically reduce carbon pollution and improve quality of life throughout the Northeastern United States.

Acadia Center supports LD 226

LD 226 “prohibits the selling, leasing, renting, installing, or entering into commerce of any product or equipment that uses or will use certain specified substances that are hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs) with high-GWP [Global Warming Potential] intended for any air conditioning, refrigeration, foam or aerosol propellant end use” as determined by the Maine Department of Environmental Protection in rules promulgated to implement the legislation. The bill is flexible and allows for future rules to add or remove substances from the list of prohibited substances or removing end uses.

Acadia Center applauds Maine Governor Janet Mills for her work with neighboring states last year, as well as the sponsors of this specific bill, for working together to advance proactive measures to reduce and eliminate use of HFCs. HFCs have GWP orders of magnitude higher than carbon dioxide (CO₂) when not properly disposed. These compounds possess hundreds to thousands of times the heat-trapping power of CO₂. Maine’s action follows directly on the heels of the December 2021 American Innovation and Manufacturing (AIM) Act that included a provision to phase down the use of HFCs on the federal level. Maine would have acted sooner in 2020, but the Legislature adjourned early last year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Better later than never, Maine is positioned to help keep HFC use in check as we prepare for a national supply phase down and is stepping up with aerosol, air conditioning, foam, and refrigerant market regulations and working with innovative companies to achieve low-cost greenhouse gas emission reductions from this particularly potent chemical.

This bill recognizes HFCs as a significant driver of climate change impacts that can be substituted in a cost-effective manner with readily-available alternatives that can be easily adopted under state rules. Acadia Center supports a phased-in, regulatory framework for reducing HFC use in Maine. Regulations that support a predictable path for the transition to low-GWP HFC alternatives will help ensure that businesses make the transition with increased certainty

to offer the same products nationwide and in a way that helps consumers in the adoption of next generation products that benefit them from a both a financial and environmental standpoint.

We understand that language is being considered that would give the DEP authority to approve or disallow chemicals used as substitutes to HFCs in the regulated applications, provided that doing so would reduce overall risk to human health and the environment and that it would be consistent with bills introduced in other states like Washington, Vermont, and New Jersey. Acadia Center would support this amended language.

Acadia Center urges the Committee to support LD 226 and looks forward to working with legislators, the DEP, and affected industry partners to responsibly phase out these chemicals and transition to a new generation of alternatives. Thank you again for the opportunity to provide written testimony. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

For more information:

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