



Testimony before the

Joint Standing Committee on Environment and Natural Resources

By Rob Wood, Director of Government Relations and Climate Policy

March 15, 2021

Re: LD 226, An Act To Limit the Use of Hydrofluorocarbons To Fight Climate Change

Senator Brenner, Representative Tucker, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Environment and Natural Resources, my name is Rob Wood and I am the Director of Government Relations and Climate Policy for The Nature Conservancy in Maine. I appreciate this opportunity to testify **in support of LD 226**, An Act To Limit the Use of Hydrofluorocarbons To Fight Climate Change.

The Nature Conservancy (TNC) is an international conservation organization dedicated to conserving the lands and waters on which all life depends. Guided by science, we create innovative, on-the-ground solutions to our world's toughest challenges so that nature and people can thrive together. Working in more than 70 countries, we use a collaborative approach that engages local communities, governments, the private sector, and other partners. The Nature Conservancy has been working in Maine for more than 60 years and is the 12th largest landowner in the state, owning and managing roughly 275,000 acres. We work across the state to restore the rivers and streams that support healthy fish populations, partner with fishermen to rebuild groundfish populations to benefit coastal communities across the Gulf of Maine, and develop innovative solutions to address the causes and impacts of climate change.

LD 226 would phase out, over time, the sale, lease, rental or installation of certain products and equipment that use hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs).

Because HFCs are such a potent greenhouse gas, securing a national HFC phasedown has been a climate priority for The Nature Conservancy. Globally, reducing HFC use in the coming years can help avoid up to 0.5 degrees Celsius in warming that would otherwise occur. We were supportive of the HFC phasedown provision in the December 2020 federal omnibus spending bill that was signed into law, aligning the U.S. with more than 100 other countries that have committed to reducing HFC use by 80 percent or more in the coming decades.

This bipartisan federal legislation allows states to pursue more ambitious phase-out schedules for HFCs, with certain preemption exceptions, which are accounted for in the sponsor's amendment to LD 226. We support the phase-out schedule in LD 226, especially since it applies only to newly purchased or retrofitted products and equipment, allowing for the continued use of products and equipment that have already been purchased and are in use today.

Importantly, the adoption of HFC regulations is a key near-term strategy in Maine's new four-year Climate Action Plan. The Nature Conservancy is honored to serve on the Climate Council, and we appreciated the consensus-based process that developed the new Action Plan. There was broad buy-in for recommending a HFC phasedown, and the time for action is ripe, with a robust manufacturing sector already producing affordable HFC alternatives today.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify, and I am happy to answer any questions now or in the future.