



MAINE RURAL WATER ASSOCIATION

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To: Senator Brenner, Representative Tucker, and Members of the Joint Committee for Environment and Natural Resources

From: Bradley Sawyer, Director of Government Affairs

Date: April 5, 2021

Re: Testimony in Support of L.D 960, An Act To Require Reporting of Perfluoroalkyl and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances, PFAS, in Products and of Discharges of Firefighting Foam Containing PFAS

Senator Brenner, Representative Tucker, and Members of the Joint Committee for Environment and Natural Resources, thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today. My name is Brad Sawyer, and I am the Director of Government Affairs for the Maine Rural Water Association.

On behalf of our members, the Maine Rural Water Association urges you to support both initiatives in L.D. 960 as they are key pieces in the fight to reduce sources of PFAS in the State of Maine. As this committee knows, treating PFAS is an expensive proposition that creates other issues such as the chemical laden residuals that require disposal. Currently, the most effective way to stop these chemicals from negatively impacting Maine's future is source reduction, something this bill helps tackle.

Requiring companies to notify the State of their products that contain PFAS will benefit the people of Maine in multiple ways. First, should there be significant problems with a compound in the future the State will have a record of where it came from and where the cost of remediation should fall. There seems to be broad agreement that the people of Maine should not bear the financial burden of cleanup when they were not producing or knowingly using these chemicals. This bill would give the State the ability to identify the entity that willingly brought them into Maine and potentially seek compensation. The second piece of this requirement is that it will likely discourage companies from bringing PFAS riddled products into Maine if they know that they will be responsible for issues caused by that compound. While this is not explicitly stated in this bill, we believe it is implied and support that concept.

Rural Water also supports the reporting section of this bill regarding discharges of aqueous film-forming foam. It should be noted that some departments across the state currently notify water utilities when they discharge near water resources. We appreciate that cooperation and support codifying that practice in state law. If PFAS from AFFF can be stopped before entering water sources it may mean less treatment is necessary at the utility level. Rural Water supports educating users of AFFF on how to identify public and private sources of water to help them fully understand where the foam is being sprayed and the implications it may have in the future.

This is a is a targeted bill that adds one piece of the puzzle to the goal of PFAS elimination. Rural Water urges you to support this legislation and start the trend of source reduction that will lead to a cleaner future for all Maine people. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to reach out to me at Bradley.Sawyer@MaineRWA.org or 207-737-9014.