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225 Evans Street, South Portland, ME 04106

DATE: May 2, 2021

TO: Members of the Environment and Natural Resources Committee RE: LD1532 "An Act to Protect Maine's Air Quality by Strengthening Requirements for Air Emissions Licensing"

Dear Senator Brenner, Representative Tucker and members of the Environment and Natural Resources Committee, my name is Kristina Grimaldi, I am a first year student at the University of Maine School of Law and I am writing today to provide my support for "An Act to Protect Maine's Air Quality by Strengthening Requirements for Air Emissions Licensing." As part of LD1532, I sincerely urge you to consider 1) Health Based Permit limits 2) 'Continuous Fence-line Monitoring' for facilities to demonstrate compliance with Health Based Permit Limits and 3) requiring emissions control technology when facilities are found to be in noncompliance.

I ask that you vote "ought to pass" on LD1532. The issues addressed in the Act and proposed amendments affect the health and livelihood of my family and my local community on a deeply personal level.

There is scientific research everywhere you look describing the negative health effects of air pollution. "People exposed to toxic air pollutants at sufficient concentrations and durations may have an increased chance of getting cancer or experiencing other serious health effects. These

health effects can include damage to the immune system, as well as neurological, developmental, respiratory and other health problems.”¹ As we have seen with the recent Covid-19 pandemic, poor respiratory health can exacerbate the effects of some viruses, putting individuals at greater risk for severe complications and placing a greater strain on the healthcare system as a whole when dealing with these healthcare crises.² Numerous studies have also shown that exposure to environmental air pollutants affects reproductive functioning and, in particular, can produce adverse effects on pregnancy outcomes, fertility, and fetal health. For example, epidemiological studies have demonstrated that exposure to ambient levels of air pollutants is associated with low birth weight, intrauterine growth retardation, prematurity, neonatal death, and decreased fertility in males.³

I had just found out I was pregnant when I discovered that the storage tanks near the home I had just recently purchased were potentially violating their emissions license and emitting toxic and hazardous air pollutants. I spent the next nine months contemplating the potential effects of the air outside my home on my unborn child, and began to save money in hopes of moving out of South Portland where air quality would not be a concern. In the interim, however, I have decided to enroll in the University of Maine School of Law with a concentration in Environmental

¹ Environmental Protection Agency, “Health and Environmental Effects of Hazardous Air Pollutants,” <https://www.epa.gov/haps/health-and-environmental-effects-hazardous-air-pollutants>

² *The Effects of Air Pollution on COVID-19 Infection and Mortality—A Review on Recent Evidence* <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7725793/>

³ *Air pollution and effects on reproductive-system functions globally with particular emphasis on the Brazilian population*, <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/20336577/>; See also *Epidemiologic evidence of relationships between reproductive and child health outcomes and environmental chemical contaminants*, <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/18470797/>.

Law to help prevent and address issues exactly like the one my neighbors and I are currently facing. To start, LD1532 is an important first step.

I have always thought of my home state as a place where I would not have to worry about clean air. It is a place I came back to after living amidst the smog of Southern California with relief and reprise. It was devastating, sad, and frankly just disappointing, to learn that it is a place where I have to worry about the air my family, my neighbors, and I breathe. The storage tanks are surrounded by residential homes, schools, and daycares, and a significant concentration of the population in Maine. The tanks are a potentially severe health hazard and a detriment to a State that is supportive of the current global movement towards environmental justice and a cleaner, healthier environment for everyone.⁴

To not pass LD1532 would be to demonstrate a lack of awareness of the severity of this issue and its impact on the local population. I urge you to place the current and generational health of communities over a small burden imposed on companies to act responsibly and ethically.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Kristina Grimaldi

⁴ “Poll Shows Strong Majority of Maine Voters Support Climate Action and Clean Energy,” <https://www.nrcm.org/news/strong-majority-maine-voters-support-climate-action-clean-energy/> May 12, 2020.