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**Testimony of Rep. Christopher Kessler
Before the Joint Standing Committee on Environment and Natural Resources
In Support of LD 1532, An Act To Protect Maine's Air Quality by Strengthening
Requirements for Air Emissions Licensing**

Senator Brenner, Representative Tucker and members of the Environment and Natural Resources Committee, my name is Chris Kessler and I represent House District 32: part of South Portland and a sliver of Cape Elizabeth. I'm pleased to speak in support of **LD 1532, An Act To Protect Maine's Air Quality by Strengthening Requirements for Air Emissions Licensing**.

You have already been given a solid overview of this legislation by my fellow South Portland delegation member and primary sponsor, Rep. Morales. She has clearly outlined how the bill would alter the regulatory process for the type of emissions that parts of our city are unfortunately known for.

The need for true accountability when it comes to what companies put into our air is real and it is urgent. The state of Maine, which is supposed to be looking out for its citizens' wellbeing, must be empowered and required to act in the service of public health and safety.

My house is about one mile away from the tanks. Some days you can't smell a thing and it isn't even a thought. But some days, even though it looks beautiful outside, the fumes are so offensive that I have to shut the windows and stay inside until the smell goes away. They are inescapable and offensive. There is no scenario under which breathing anything like that can be good for our residents. No amount of VOCs are good to breathe. I do not envy the folks who are constantly exposed because they live within 1,000 feet of those tanks.

It is not acceptable to say, "Oh well, these people chose to live in an industrial city, so they're just going to have to deal with it." It is important to remember that this storage infrastructure would not be there today if it weren't for the federal government using eminent domain during World War II. It is not acceptable to put the onus on people to tolerate noxious fumes; the responsibility lies with those who are making public health conditions worse for all those around them.

That's why it's completely reasonable to require emissions control technology, real-time emissions monitoring and licensing standards directly tied to public health-based benchmarks. We must do each of these things to ensure the air we breathe is not harmful to us.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on behalf of my community.