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Distinguished members of the committee, my name is Julian Blohm and I'm testifying in strong support of LD 1541. This bill is the complete package: it increases recycling, reduces pollution, lowers taxes for Mainers, and is opposed by the exact right people, more on that later. To start, this proposal is a big win for the rivers, mountains, forests, and harbors, that all make Maine the way life should be. This is because with an EPR tax in place, companies will need to manage their waste far better, or risk paying the price for their malpractice. You don't have to take my word for it, however, because it has already been implemented in over fifty countries, and has been wildly successful. For example, they did the same EPR tax in Germany, and saw a 13% decrease in packaging waste over seven years, and in Quebec, they did the same thing, and saw an 20% increase in recycling. The evidence couldn't be any clearer: this EPR tax is a massive win for our environment, but on top of that, it actually reduces the taxes that Mainers pay all together. Currently, when a company produces wasteful packaging, it's taxpayers that clean up the mess, subsidizing recycling to the tune of 16 million dollars a year in Maine. However, this bill would relieve that tax burden from everyday people, and place it on the megacorporations responsible for the waste in the first place. Coincidentally, these companies also happen to be the same ones lobbying fiercely against this bill, and they even wrote their own bill to counter this one, known as LD 1471. This bill is nothing more than a Trojan horse for the status quo, as it exempts far too many packaging goods, and adds unnecessary bureaucracy that would make enforcing this law far too difficult. If that wasn't bad enough, the group responsible for LD 1471, AMERIPEN, has members such as McDonalds, Tyson foods, Kellogg's, and McCormick, which just so happen to be the exact companies that produce some of the worst waste in the country. If that's not a conflict of interest, then I don't know what is. The companies most responsible for packaging waste, writing their own bill on it, would be just like a drug enforcement bill written by Pablo Escobar. So to the lawmakers listening in on this session, do Maine's environment, your children, and your constituents proud, and vote in favor of LD 1541, protect our environment for generations to come, and show once again how Maine is one of the most independent, and uncorrupted states in the country.