

Sarah Dennison
Bangor

Hi Representative Tucker, Senator Brenner, and the Environment and Natural Resources Committee,

(UPDATED VERSION)

I spoke last year, I was a waitress, and now I'm a grad student at UMaine. I grew up in Maine, and my Dad's side of the family has lived here for generations. Like many of my family and friends here, I'd like Maine to be sustainable for many more generations. I want to strongly support LD1541 and strongly oppose bill LD1471. Maine is known to many as vacationland, and many people who live here choose it because they want to be surrounded by natural beauty. But our waste is piling up and we need to stop the flow. Not recycling is basically littering. We need to be resourceful with our materials. We need it to be easy to recycle everything. As a person who recycles often, I'm frustrated by the number of items that are not recyclable and add to Maine's expanding landfills. We need a recycling bill that requires corporations to be responsible with their products and ensure that they will not end up in landfills. Many towns can't recycle because they can't afford it. We need to make it as easy as possible for towns to recycle, and LD1541 has made that possible. Maine needs recycling programs that are financially reliable. LD1471 has a bunch of ways that corporations can get out of funding town recycling programs, and not designing recyclable products. Further, I am very concerned about toxics in packaging products, and only LD1541 addresses toxicity. We need to reduce toxic substances being used and infiltrating into our environment, and only LD1541 would do so.

LD1541 would not increase costs of groceries, that's just a scare to try to prevent passing a recycling bill. It has already been stated by previous speakers that in Canada recycling programs like this did not increase the cost of groceries and goods. Similar bottle bills did not increase costs of bottled goods. The mere study of a NY model (funded by whom with what interests is unclear) and is not as legitimate as the hard and fast evidence of success of similar bills in 40 countries which did not increase the cost of food. I urge you not to listen to fear-based arguments which say recycling will scare away business, it seems this has not happened anywhere which has enacted similar bills.

LD1541 has already been designed to effectively help towns recycle and reduce waste, it's been worked on for years and the process does not need to be dragged out any further, it needs to be enacted. We don't need better data, there has been plenty of research, and many stakeholders have had plenty of time to discuss their interests in these bills. we need LD1541 now. Trash that could be recycled is piling up, and we need to address it now.

Thanks for your time,
Sarah Dennison