



Testimony in support of LD 164, “An Act To Establish Maximum Contaminant Levels under the State's Drinking Water Rules for Certain Perfluoroalkyl and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS)”

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Senator Claxton, Representative Meyer, and distinguished members of the Health and Human Services (HHS) Committee:

I am testifying on behalf of the Natural Resources Council of Maine (NRCM) in support of LD 164. NRCM is Maine’s largest environmental advocacy group, with more than 25,000 members and supporters.

PFAS, including perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS) and perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA), are dangerous, persistent chemicals. They are used in many different products, such as flame retardants, non-stick coatings for cookware, and waterproofing for clothing. These chemicals persist in the environment and are now ubiquitous. They are present in water, soils, animal tissue, and our own bodies. They are sometimes found in drinking water at alarming levels.

According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency:

Studies indicate that PFOA and PFOS can cause reproductive and developmental, liver and kidney, and immunological effects in laboratory animals. Both chemicals have caused tumors in animal studies. The most consistent findings from human epidemiology studies are increased cholesterol levels among exposed populations, with more limited findings related to:

- infant birth weights,
- effects on the immune system,
- cancer (for PFOA), and
- thyroid hormone disruption (for PFOS).¹

NRCM urges the HHS Committee to pass LD 164. It would set the Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) for drinking water for PFAS at 20 ppt, significantly more protective than the federal guideline of 70 ppt. Both Massachusetts and Vermont have set an ML of 20 ppt for PFAS in drinking water.

In addition, NRCM supports amending LD 164 to require regular testing for PFAS at all community and non-community, non-transient water systems.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this important issue.

¹ Accessed at <https://www.epa.gov/pfas/basic-information-pfas#health>