Please accept this input as you consider LD164. My name is Kathy Higgins and I am a lifelong Maine resident, having lived the last 24 years in Brunswick, District 49. In the 1990's, I was part of a team who investigated and planned remediation of environmental impacts at the former Loring Air Force Base and Naval Air Station Brunswick. I served as Community Relations Specialist for ABB Environmental Services. Our company was committed to finding solutions to mitigate significant environmental issues associated with these restoration programs. My job was to translate technical findings for the communities and make sure we met all obligations to inform and involve the public.

We worked with highly committed military and regulatory personnel at the state DEP and the EPA. We were able to conduct these important programs as a coordinated front because of **defined and enforceable standards** for the assessment and cleanup of each Contaminant of Concern. Based on that experience, I believe that suggested guidelines, as we have now for P-FAS chemicals, do not provide the enforceability to hold all those accountable to do their parts to protect public health.

So I'm asking that you support a Maximum Contaminant Level drinking water standard of 20PPT for P-FAs chemicals under Bill 164. As protective as this appears to be, well below the 70 PPT guideline suggested by the EPA, **it is wise**... because public water is not the only source of our exposure. This group of more than 4,000 chemicals has been widely used since the 1940's and are nicknamed Forever Chemicals because they are designed to be indestructible, they do not break down. If you have stain and water resistant clothing and furnishings, non-stick cookware, and use packaged foods, right down to pizza boxes, I guarantee that you are already frequently exposed to these chemicals and have been for many years. Fire fighting materials also contain high concentrations of these chemicals, which is why they so often appear in groundwater near bases and airports. And although some have been banned from production in the US, many are still in use and imported products still contain a lot of them.

Once ingested, they stay with us. The chemicals collect in the plants, animals and fish we eat and then accumulate in our bodies, prompting testicular and kidney cancers, decreased vaccine response, and low birth weights, among other serious issues.

And although communities like mine who host former military installations tend to be obvious sources of concern, many Maine communities are also impacted by the presence of these chemicals near landfills, manufacturing facilities, and farms in addition to their presence in daily life. Setting an enforceable standard of 20 PPT as have Vermont and Massachusetts, will help to stay ahead of further damage already being done by other exposure. New Jersey, New Hampshire and New York have adopted standards as low as 14, 12 and 10 PPT respectively, clearly attempting to do just that. Setting the lowest possible drinking water maximum will help hedge against the many ways we are already exposed each day.Thank you for your consideration and your efforts in this important matter on our behalf.

Kathy Higgins
Brunswick

Because time ran short for my testimony yesterday, please accept my full remarks for LD 164. Thank you!