



Testimony in Support of
LD 222 An Act to Establish a Take-back and Disposal Program for Firefighting and Fire-suppressing Foam to Which Perfluoroalkyl and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances Have Been Added
and
LD 400 Resolve, Directing the Department of Public Safety, Office of the State Fire Marshal to Compile a Statewide Inventory of Aqueous Film-forming Foam Concentrate

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Senator Tepler, Representative Doudera, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Environment and Natural Resources, my name is Vanessa Berry, and I serve as the Sustainable Maine Program Manager for the Natural Resources Council of Maine (NRCM). I appreciate the opportunity to testify in strong support of LD 222 and LD 400, two critical bills sponsored by Representative Ankeles that address the management of PFAS-containing fire suppressants.

Last summer, Brunswick Landing experienced the largest spill of toxic firefighting foam in Maine's history, releasing 1,450 gallons of aqueous film forming foam (AFFF) concentrate mixed with 50,000 gallons of water.¹ This spill contaminated nearby water sources, impacting local drinking water, soil health, and wildlife, with long-term consequences still unfolding. This event served as a stark reminder of the urgent need to assess and manage our existing stockpiles of PFAS-containing foam in a safe and responsible manner. Without proactive measures to identify storage sites and ensure proper collection and disposal, future spills are not just possible—they are inevitable. The result would be further environmental damage and increased costs to taxpayers for emergency response and cleanup.

The health risks associated with PFAS exposure are well-documented. These chemicals have been linked to an increased risk of certain cancers, weakened immune system response, hormonal disruption, reduced fertility, and developmental harm in children.² As a new mom myself, I am deeply concerned about the impacts of increased PFAS contamination and how it may jeopardize my ability to protect the health of my own family. I join with many others worrying that exposure to these chemicals in our water supplies might cause irreparable harm to our children as they grow. These bills can help reduce the possibility of PFAS contamination entering the environment from a known material — AFFF — which can and should be systematically inventoried and replaced through a take-back program.

With PFAS contamination becoming a growing concern across our state, the Natural Resources Council of Maine strongly supports efforts to ensure the safe collection and disposal of these hazardous materials. Additionally, we advocate for more comprehensive data collection to determine the volume of AFFF currently stored in Maine. Without a clear understanding of the scale of this issue, effective management remains a challenge.

Maine has already taken significant steps to reduce PFAS use in consumer products and to address contamination at its source. Now, we must implement a robust plan to manage the PFAS-laden materials that remain. While we also believe it is critical to hold manufacturers accountable for the harm caused by these chemicals, LD 222 and LD 400 offer practical solutions that can be implemented this year.

¹ <https://www.maine.gov/dep/projects/bnas/index.html>

² <https://www.epa.gov/pfas/our-current-understanding-human-health-and-environmental-risks-pfas>

We urge this Committee to support these bills and take decisive action to identify storage sites, mitigate risks, and ensure the responsible management of PFAS-containing AFFF foam. Please vote “Ought to Pass” on LD 222 and LD 400. Thank you for your time, consideration, and continued commitment to addressing PFAS contamination in Maine.