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Governor, I appreciate this opportunity to share some thoughts from the perspective of a college student who is studying sustainable agriculture and horticulture.

I have lived my entire life in Maine, and hope that Maine will always be my home. We have in this state a treasured environment that people from around the country, and literally around the world, come to visit.

I am aware that Maine's rivers once suffered from such tremendous pollution that fish could hardly live in the Androscoggin, Penobscot, and Kennebec Rivers. I am aware that Maine once didn't have a bottle bill, and our roadways were littered with trash. I'm also aware that we didn't always have environmental laws to reduce air pollution and toxic chemicals in the work place.

For many people in my generation, it's hard for us to believe that these laws didn't always exist. It doesn't make sense that we wouldn't take great care of our environment – especially in a place like Maine – even as we pursue economic growth and jobs.

My plan is to live a life in a way that minimizes impacts on the environment. I don't believe that we need to trade-off jobs and the environment. Quite the opposite, it seems to my generation that future jobs will depend on careful stewardship of our natural resources.

We still face serious environmental challenges, in Maine, the nation, and the world. I know from studying the science that climate change will have major impacts on Maine and the world during my lifetime. We still need to move toward more sustainable use of our resources, and continue to reduce pollution that is a risk to our health.

I hope that our political leaders keep our environmental laws strong, to protect what is so important for my future in the State of Maine.

Remarks at "Maine People and the Environment" roundtable with Governor LePage
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