



Help Mainers Dispose of Unused Drugs Safely and for Free

Support: LD 8

An Act to Support Collection and Proper Disposal of Unwanted Drugs

Sponsored by: Sen. Anne Carney of Cumberland

Co-sponsored by: Rep. Hymanson of York

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LD 8 would create a reliable, sustainable, and convenient statewide pharmacy collection program for unused drugs, which has important benefits for Mainers.

This bill would:

- Decrease the risk of accidental poisoning and drug overdoses by preventing unused medications, like opioids, from accumulating in homes and getting into the wrong hands.
- Offer an environmentally safe alternative to landfilling or flushing of unwanted drugs. Without a convenient and well-established alternative, pharmaceutical chemicals can accumulate in our waters and pose a serious threat to people and wildlife.
- Establish a network of drug-collection kiosks and prepaid mail-back envelopes at pharmacies throughout Maine, which will supplement existing drug take-back events and police station drop-off sites.
- Provide flexibility to pharmacies in how they participate while also ensuring an adequate collection network throughout the state that Mainers can rely on anytime throughout the year.

Other U.S. states are benefiting from drug take-back programs funded by drug producers, and Maine should, too. Producer-funded waste management programs have proven themselves to be effective in Maine and beyond:

- Since 2012, six states have established producer-funded drug take-back programs: MA, VT, WA, NY, OR, and CA. Twenty-three U.S. cities and counties have done so, too. Managing these programs costs manufacturers only pennies on a prescription, and does not increase medication cost to consumers.
- Maine has already established successful producer-funded and managed stewardship programs for seven other difficult-to-manage waste types including: electronic waste like computers, unused paints, old mercury thermostats, auto switches, lamps that contain mercury, cell phones, and rechargeable batteries.