

## Public Hearing Summary

LD 1541: An Act to Support and Improve Municipal Recycling Programs and Save Taxpayer Money

May 10, 2021, 9:00 am on Zoom

*"I am a founding member and former owner of Flight Deck Brewing, a craft brewery in Brunswick. While I cannot speak for Flight Deck Brewing,... From this experience, I can say that the bottle bill has little effect on business revenues. While it's true the bottle bill does end up costing breweries about 2 cents per bottle, it's hardly an amount that is going to break or even substantially harm a business, even for a startup company like ours. I believe the current legislation for extended producer responsibility, LD 1541, would have even less of an effect on Maine-based businesses... In a state whose state motto is "I lead," I can see no better endeavor than to be the first to boldly strike at the heart of our waste issues and enact legislation that deters the largest producers from overwhelming our waste management systems."*

*Jared Entwistle*

LD 1541

There were 70 testimonies in support of LD 1541 from a diversity of stakeholders including:

- Maine business owners large and small
- Municipal staff, local elected officials, and local recycling committee volunteers
- Solid waste professionals
- State lawmakers
- Non-profit & religious institutions
- Taxpayers
- Middle & high school students; undergraduate and graduate school students
- University of Maine faculty

The municipal resolutions of 29 towns representing over 325,000 Mainers were submitted in support of an EPR law like LD 1541.

There were 40 opposed, 22 of those being from out of state industry lobbyists. Another 10 were opposed not just to LD 1541, but also 1471.

The Maine Department of Environmental Protection was neither for nor against, along with the Maine Municipal Association and four others.

*"The consumer cannot avoid the packaging or pass the costs down and unless something changes we can only expect increasing levels of frustration and waste from those who we know would much rather be recycling and reducing that waste. From my perspective LD 1541 seems to be a sensible way to remind manufacturers that even if their products are recyclable it costs money to recycle them and if they are not recyclable they need to reduce those amounts and should help pay to get rid of it."*

*John Fusco, Ogunquit Transfer Station*

LD 1471 was heard at the same time as LD 1541. It received little attention:

There were only 15 testimonies in support of LD 1471. Not a single taxpayer, municipality, solid waste professional, non-profit, or business owner supported LD 1471.

- Fourteen of 15 testimonies came from out of state industry lobbyists
- Only one testimony came from a Maine lobbying group.

There were 41 testimonies in opposition to LD 1471, including the Maine Department of Environmental Protection's and the Maine Municipal Association's.

Eleven testimonies were neither for nor against.

*"This bill [LD 1471] is nothing more than a Trojan horse for the status quo, as it exempts far too many packaging goods,... If that wasn't bad enough, the group responsible for LD 1471, AMERIPEN, has members such as McDonalds, Tyson foods, Kellogg's, and McCormick, which just so happen to be the exact companies that produce some of the worst waste in the country. If that's not a conflict of interest, then I don't know what is. The companies most responsible for packaging waste, writing their own bill on it, would be just like a drug enforcement bill written by Pablo Escobar. So to the lawmakers listening in on this session, do Maine's environment, your children, and your constituents proud, and vote in favor of LD 1541, protect our environment for generations to come, and show once again how Maine is one of the most independent, and uncorrupted states in the country."*

*Julian Blohm*