



Don't Waste ME

2022 People's Choice Award

for advocating for policies that protect communities most at risk from the negative impacts of waste facilities, including their recent work to close the out-of-state waste loophole in Maine law

I would like to invite my friends Ed Spencer and Bill Lippincott to join me up here now, to represent Don't Waste ME. If other Don't Waste ME folks are here, you're also welcome to come on down.

The people who comprise this amazing group have been working for decades to raise the alarm and alert lawmakers about how waste companies have been allowed to reclassify their waste in order to take advantage of Maine's State-owned landfill at Juniper Ridge in Old Town. They live in the region, so they have experienced first-hand what it's like to have 200,000 tons of out-of-state waste dumped every year in the community that is their home. That's the equivalent of 16 tractor trailer loads *every day*.

Without their watchdogging and keeping the pressure on, NRCM would not have known the history and extent of the Juniper Ridge landfill issue, and we would not have had the information we needed to help persuade lawmakers to pass LD 1639, which closed the loophole on out-of-state waste. Don't Waste ME was key to this massive effort. They organized events, held meetings, and were always prepared to take on more tasks whenever needed to advocate for this policy. As members of the Old Town community, their conversations with lawmakers were especially important. Closing the loophole was a huge win not only for members of Don't Waste ME and for the Penobscot Nation, who live in the shadow of the landfill, but also for everyone living in the state because it preserves landfill capacity as a resource for us all. On behalf of the Natural Resources Council of Maine, I am honored to present our 2022 People's Choice Award to Don't Waste ME.