



Conservation Law Foundation



Dear Senator Brenner, Representative Gramlich, and distinguished members of the Committee on Environment and Natural Resources:

The undersigned organizations write to voice their support for LD 1814, An Act to Reduce Mercury In The Environment By Phasing Out Certain Fluorescent Light Bulbs. This mercury-containing lighting equipment can be easily and affordably replaced by much more energy-efficient, mercury-free LED lighting equipment. Phasing out fluorescents is a proven mechanism to save families and businesses money on utility bills, protect public health, and decrease carbon emissions.

All fluorescent bulbs contain mercury, a potent neurotoxin that the World Health Organization counts as one of the top 10 most dangerous chemicals impacting public health. An estimated 75% of these bulbs are disposed of improperly, which leads to mercury emissions from waste to energy facilities or landfill leachate, which pollutes the air we breathe and water we drink.

A 2022 study published jointly by the American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy and Appliance Standards Awareness Project confirmed LEDs are now widely available and provide the same or better lighting, longer product life, and much lower total cost than fluorescents.

If implemented, LD 1814 would:

- Help Maine households and businesses save more than \$20 million annually on their utility bills by 2030
- Prevent 178,000 metric tons of carbon dioxide emissions per year by 2050, the equivalent of 38,000 gasoline-powered cars driven for a year
- Avoid 45 pounds of mercury waste from polluting our environment, enough to contaminate 2.2 billion gallons of water

In 2022, Vermont and California became the first states to phase out the sale of most fluorescent lightbulbs, and many other states are considering similar laws. Maine laws already regulate mercury-containing products, including fluorescent light bulbs, because of their toxic nature. We can continue this effort to protect Maine from mercury pollution by passing LD 1814 and ensuring a transition from fluorescents to LEDs.

Sincerely,

Appliance Standards Awareness Project
 Conservation Law Foundation
 Defend Our Health
 Maine Resource Recovery Association
 Maine Rivers
 Midcoast Conservancy
 National Stewardship Action Council
 Natural Resources Council of Maine