

**MRC Testimony on LD 1660 “An Act to Provide That Advanced Recycling Facilities Are Subject to Solid Waste Regulation and That Advanced Recycling Does Not Constitute Recycling**

**Robert Butler**

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Senator Brenner, Representative Gramlich, members of the Committee on Environment and Natural Resources, thank **you** for all of **your** hard work.

My name is Robert Butler. I serve on the Board of the Municipal Review Committee (MRC), the Waldoboro Select Board, and the Maine Municipal Association Executive Committee. I’m here on behalf of the MRC, its Board of Directors, and its Executive Director, Michael Carroll, who could not be here to testify because he is working hard to restart the waste processing plant in Hampden.

I am submitting this testimony to express the MRC’s opposition to LD 1660. It complements the written testimony I submitted late last week.

MRC is concerned LD1660 will stymie the efforts of MRC’s 115 member communities to process *their* municipal solid waste. Those communities utilized and will utilize when the Hampden plant restarts, diversion technologies that are proven, safe, relatively new and in full compliance with the National Recycling Policy.

As I read it, LD 1660 calls for facilities intending to use pyrolysis and other technologies to apply for and acquire a solid waste facility license before they operate. The MRC has no particular objections at this time to having regulations include the proposed definitions of waste processing technologies.

However, the MRC does object when LD1660 contradicts itself. How can Section 9 on the one hand, define “Recycling” as activities that use recycled materials as an industrial feedstock in place of raw materials to manufacture new products with minimal loss of material quality and quantity and, on the other hand, exclude from

the definition of Recycling the very technologies that accomplish the goal of recycling as described in the bill? For example: As part of its efforts to restart the Hampden plant, the MRC has examined technologies that use waste plastic as feedstock for plastic production. Using waste plastics as feedstock reduces demand for new raw materials for plastic production. The technology fabricates new products from waste plastics with minimal loss of material quality and quantity. This is exactly the process that Section 9 defines as "Recycling" and yet, Section 9—inexplicably and in the same breath—excludes pyrolysis from the definition of Recycling. Section 10 of the legislation—which excludes “Advanced Recycling Facilities” from the definition of “Recycling Facility”--would put MRC’s Hampden plant into limbo and exclude it from Maine’s recycling infrastructure.

**The State of Maine must encourage waste recovery and the use of recovered waste to manufacture products for beneficial use. LD1660 does the opposite. Our country’s National Recycling Policy encourages the Circular Economy. Why does LD1660 overlook it?**

The bottom line: LD 1660 would raise barriers against Maine facilities that actually process waste and make products from it. With LD 1660 in place, MRC’s Hampden Plant would be hard-pressed to divert more municipal solid waste away from **landfills and incinerators**.

The MRC is committed to cooperating with this Committee. It will continue to foster--and to work within --the circular economy to the benefit every Maine resident.

Thank you.