

To: Honored Chairs Sen. Cohen and Rep. Demicco and Distinguished Members of the Environment Committee

Testimony on: HB5103, HB5104, HJ1 & SB99

From: Susannah Wood

I want to urge the members of the Environment Committee to support these important environmental bills.

HB 5103 will update the Environmental Justice legislation passed in 2008 making it mandatory that developers get public input from the people who will bear the health burden of that development, be it a landfill, new power generating facility, or some other project that produces a significant burden of pollutants. Low-income black and Latino neighborhoods have borne that burden for too long without having much say in the process. Richer communities consume more than poorer ones but have had the power to say “not in my back yard,” pushing waste treatment facilities to communities with less political sway with drastic results in the health of the people who live there in increased rates of asthma and other diseases affected by air quality. This is an important step toward more environmental justice.