



May 6, 2009

Senator Seth Goodall, Chair
Representative Robert Duchesne, Chair and
Members of the Natural Resources Committee

LD 973 – An Act to Provide for the Safe Collection and Recycling of Mercury-containing Lighting

Dear Senator Goodall, Representative Duchesne and members of the Natural Resources Committee:

During the public hearing process, the Maine Merchants Association testified neither for nor against LD 973, An Act to Provide for the Safe Collection and Recycling of Mercury-containing Lighting. The bill proposed a method for the proper collection and disposal of compact fluorescent lighting (CFL) that is based on the current program for recycling televisions by asking the manufacturer of the product to provide for the collection and proper disposal.

Our testimony asked the committee to take the necessary time to understand the impact of enacting this piece of legislation. Over the years, Maine's legislature has considered various programs on particular consumer products and our interest is to protect undue burden on Maine's retail community. However, recognizing that LD 973 was not directly impacting the retail community, we did not take a position on the legislation.

We understand that a proposal is being considered which would place the burden of the CFL collection program squarely on the shoulders of the retail community. This is a concept that we must strongly oppose.

The responsibility for the collection and proper disposal of used CFL's is not best handled by retailers. Doing so would create a less efficient system and tag the retail community with additional costs that cannot be borne in this economy. We have spoken with the Natural Resources Council of Maine and the representatives of the lighting manufacturers. We have relayed our concerns with the concept of placing the program on retailers. We urge the committee to consider other options with LD 973.

Thank you for the opportunity to share our views on LD 973 and we are happy to provide any additional information the committee may request.

Sincerely,

Curtis Picard
Executive Director

Jim McGregor
Director of Government Affairs