

Testimony in Favor of LD 1679: An Act To Establish The Maine Climate Change Council To Assist Maine To Mitigate, Prepare For And Adapt To Climate Change, presented by Melanie Lanctot, Climate Change Committee Co-Chair, Maine Unitarian Universalist State Advocacy Network

May 17, 2019

Senator Carson, Representative Tucker and Members of the Environment & Natural Resources Committee:

My name is Melanie Lanctot, and I'm testifying in favor of LD 1679 on behalf of the Maine Unitarian Universalist State Advocacy Network. One of our denomination's core principals is based on the understanding that humanity is a part of the interdependent web of life and that we have a responsibility for its protection.

Human-induced loss of biodiversity has progressed to such a degree that we are in the midst of the 6th great period of extinctions, referred to by many geologists as the Anthropocene, the Age of Mankind. And the rate of extinctions is accelerating; according to a recent United Nations' report, 1,000,000 species are threatened with extinction, many within decades. This report further states, "The essential interconnected web of life on Earth is getting smaller and increasingly frayed." "We are eroding the very foundations of our economies, livelihoods, food security, health and quality of life worldwide." Climate change is currently the third greatest factor in this loss of diversity, behind direct habitat destruction and species exploitation, but the influence of climate change on extinctions is expected to increase in the coming decades.

The last four years have been the hottest on record. Greenhouse gas emissions have doubled since 1980, and after a brief period of stabilizing, are again increasing. In October of 2018, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change reported that to avoid the most devastating effects of climate change, global CO2 levels need to fall 45% by 2030, reaching net 0 by 2050. The goals set by LD 1679 are consistent with those of the IPCC and show that Maine is willing to do our part to mitigate climate change and minimize damage to the web of life that sustains us.

I ask you to support LD 1679. Thank you for your attention.