



**Senator Brownie Carson Co-Chr
Representative Ralph Tucker Co-Chr
Members of the Joint Committee on Environment and Natural Resources**

**Re: LD 1915 Resolve: Directing the Department of Environmental Protection To
Evaluate Emissions from Heated Aboveground Petroleum Storage Tanks**

Date: January 24, 2020

**Dear Senator Carson and Representative Tucker,
Members of the Joint Committee**

I am writing as a Sierra Club Maine volunteer representing our 28,000 members and supporters to urge you to vote “ought to pass” on LD 1915.

VOC Emissions from tank farms were reported, finally when the EPA decided to issue a judgement against one of the tank farm companies in South Portland last March. The significance of the emissions are deeply concerning as the farm is located in one Maine’s most heavily populated residential areas in South Portland and in close proximity to Portland. In fact, many South Portland schools are located within a half a mile from either Sprague or Global tanks¹. Because the Maine DEP does not yet monitor the air in tank farm area, residents of both Portland and South Portland have been unaware of the actual risks that they have been living with, though not unaware of the noxious odors. There is no information about emissions from other tank farms in Maine such as in Sprague Energy’s Searsport location, or in other fuel depots such as in Bangor, Lewiston/Auburn, etc. In addition there is no information about emissions from other chemical and fossil fuel storage tanks and the emissions when those tanks are filled.

Evaluating the emissions from the tank farms in South Portland and in other areas of the state is an important step towards protecting public and environmental health. Becoming informed of the actual air quality of these areas will assist the legislature and the DEP in planning a means of reducing risk to these communities. Health of our communities depends upon clean air and clean water. Costs to the State of Maine by

<https://insideclimatenews.org/news/10062019/south-portland-oil-tank-farm-fumes-vocs-children-health-epa-tests-maine>



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allowing such excessive emissions from Heated Aboveground Petroleum Storage Tanks are yet to be identified. But in these days of prohibitive healthcare costs, it behoves us to prevent these kinds of unacceptable emissions.

Personally, as a grandmother of two young children, I have been concerned about the odor of chemicals in the air when I have visited them at their house in South Portland more than two miles from the tank farm. Depending upon prevailing wind patterns the tank farms pose a risk to a very large portion of greater Portland. It is incumbent upon the Legislature to evaluate these emissions with the intent of finding a means to control air pollutants that pose hazards to our population and beyond.

Sierra Club Maine urges the Committee to vote “Ought to Pass”

Respectfully Submitted,

**Becky Layton Bartovics
Council of Club Leaders
Sierra Club Maine**