

Jan. 28, 2023

Dear Members of the Environment and Natural Resources Committee:

We are writing you in support of LD 164: An Act to Fund the Lake Restoration and Protection Fund.

Our family has been fortunate enough to have and enjoy camps on Wesserunnett Lake (Madison) and Moosehead Lake (Lily Bay) for six generations, dating back for about 100 years. We have over the decades seen development and poor land uses in the watersheds of many lakes result in degradation of water quality leading to algae blooms. These could have been prevented.

Our family has participated in the water quality monitoring program for Wesserunnett Lake since 1982. We have been active in the Lake Wesserunnett Association (LWA) and its various committees over the years. The LWA was fortunate to have Colby College conduct a land use/water quality study in 2000. The study's report concluded that the lake was "at a critical stage in the eutrophication process" and that its future water quality was "uncertain". It stated that the lake had reached "... the threshold at which ecologically detrimental algal blooms can occur" and presented a number of recommended actions which the LWA has attempted to implement. Over 20 years after the report, however, we are still at the same stage as lack of funding for preventive measures has been lacking. .

The proposed funding is not only essential for improving lakes that are already degraded but also for preventing lakes such as Wesserunnett from being further impacted. Funding actions to prevent degradation is much more cost-effective than spending money for restoration. It will be money well-invested. We therefore urge passage of this bill.

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