

In support of : LD 164, An Act to Fund Lake Restoration and Protection

Good morning Chairs and distinguished members of the Environment and Natural Resources Committee.

My name is Robyn Silberstein. I live in Surry. I am President of the Toddy Pond Association. Lucy Leaf, Surry, Vice-President of the Toddy Pond Association.

We support Bill LD 164, An Act to Fund the Lake Restoration and Protection Fund.

- ❖ Our Lake Association has been protecting Toddy Pond in Hancock County since we organized 25 years ago.
- ❖ As a popular fishing lake with a convenient boat launch on Route One, our lake has the highest **boat use** in our County, with 5 bass fishing tournaments last year. On a busy day, we inspect over 50 boats. Since boats are considered the most likely way that invasive species are introduced into a lake, and with infestations to the east and immediately west of us, the spread of invasive species is a huge concern.
- ❖ The first line of defense against invasive species is our boat inspection program. Our second line of defense is patrolling 31 miles of shoreline hoping that if an infestation takes hold we will catch it early.
- ❖ But **working** as volunteers, the job of protecting our lakes has become bigger than what we can handle in today's world. And this is BEFORE our lake is infested or BEFORE we have an algae bloom, which is **no longer a matter of if - but when**. Fund raising, grant writing, managing budgets, payroll, and contracts go beyond our scope. **This is not sustainable.**
- ❖ A targeted strategy and one way the **state could help us in Hancock County**, where we have 270 named lakes but only a few active lake groups, would be to help start a regional lake association as we see in the southern and central regions of Maine. Pooling resources, including paid coordinators of boat inspections, plant patrollers, water testers and lake smart educators (teaching homeowners best lake practices) would provide county wide support .

Please support this bill by **investing in our treasured natural resource** and help KEEP MAINE BEAUTIFUL, including its lakes.

We would like to thank the committee for the opportunity to address you today.