



February 14, 2023

Dear Senator Rotundo, Representative Sachs, and Distinguished Members of the Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs,

My name is Lauren Pickford and I am the Planning and Land Use Manager for the Lakes Environmental Association (LEA), which serves the Lake Region of Western Maine and all of Maine's lakes through the Maine Lake Science Center.

LEA strongly supports LD 212: "An Act to Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue to Upgrade Municipal Culverts at Stream Crossings"

Our organization is currently working to improve road-stream crossings in western Maine and we have found many of the most problematic sites are municipally owned. This bill would provide a funding mechanism for towns to take on these projects.

Maine's clean streams and rivers are unique and provide habitat for fish and other wildlife. Surveys have shown that the majority of culvert crossings in Maine are some type of barrier to fish passage and other aquatic wildlife. Replacing damaged or undersized culverts with upgraded structures will help maintain our iconic and nationally renowned native brook trout populations.

Upgraded stream crossings are also more resilient to climate change and flooding. Culvert washouts result in gravel, sand, and debris entering our waterbodies and can cut off residents and businesses from emergency services. Because the fixes have to be done quickly and often in winter months, they are usually expensive and temporary.

This bill would provide much-needed funding to address all these issues and I hope you will vote "out to pass" on LD 212.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lauren Pickford".

Lauren Pickford
Planning and Land Use Manager



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